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HEZBOLLAH AND TALIBAN – Hybrid Adversaries in Contemporary Conflicts?

Views on an Adversary from the United States Armed Forces Perspective

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<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>The experiences of the United States Armed Forces of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War resulted a new term to surface called “hybrid warfare”. It was to describe the complexity of today’s battlefield. The term “hybrid warfare” was never officially defined nor is it today. The updated version of the US ARMY Field Manual 3-0: Operations (Change 1) from February 22, 2011, introduced and defined “hybrid threat” and thus opened the discussion for <i>hybrid adversary</i>.</p> <p>In this thesis a model is introduced according to which any organization, group or an adversary can be examined and evaluated to see whether it qualifies as a <i>hybrid adversary</i>. It is demonstrated by the example of Hezbollah, which is recognized as the best example of an organization utilizing “hybrid warfare” and subsequently categorizing as a <i>hybrid adversary</i>. The model will be tested with Afghan Taliban to see whether both the model works and Taliban qualifies as a <i>hybrid adversary</i> or not.</p> <p>According to the model used in this thesis, it is concluded that Taliban does not meet the standards of a <i>hybrid adversary</i>, but with acquisition of standoff weapons it would quickly qualify as one. The model proved to work, and it could be used as a tool by intelligence officers for estimating the threat levels of any group or identifying those groups that are already or are about to develop into a <i>hybrid adversary</i>.</p>	
<p>KEY WORDS</p> <p>Hybrid warfare, hybrid threat, hybrid adversary, Hezbollah, Taliban, Second Lebanon War, Lebanon, Afghanistan, modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary.</p>	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1	Hybrid Warfare	7
1.2	Research questions and Methodology	10
1.3	Frame of Reference and Limitations	11
1.4	References	17
2	HYBRID WAR – HEZBOLLAH IN SECOND LEBANON WAR.....	21
2.1	Hezbollah	21
2.1.1	Background	21
2.1.2	Early Terrorist Campaigns	23
2.2	Background To The Second Lebanon War	25
2.3	A Retaliatory Campaign Escalating to a War	26
2.4	Characteristic of the Second Lebanon War and Hezbollah.....	28
2.5	Summary	33
3	THE MODIFIED MODEL OF IDENTIFYING A HYBRID ADVERSARY.....	37
3.1	Background	37
3.2	The Model	41
3.2.1	Capability	42
3.2.1.1	Weapon	43
3.2.1.2	Training.....	44
3.2.1.3	Sustainability.....	44
3.2.2	Maturity.....	47
3.2.2.1	Strategy.....	47
3.2.2.2	Degree of organization and cohesion	48
3.2.2.3	Responsiveness to internal leadership and foreign state sponsors	49
3.2.2.4	Depth of leadership	50
3.2.3	Complex Terrain	51
3.2.3.1	Geographical Terrain.....	51
3.2.3.2	Human Terrain	52
3.2.3.3	Cyberspace	53
3.3	Summary	55
4	TALIBAN AND THE AFGHAN INSURGENCY	58
4.1	Background	58
4.2	The Birth of a Taliban Nation	59
4.3	From the Fall to the Insurgency.....	62
5	TALIBAN AND THE MODEL	69
5.1	Capability	69
5.2	Maturity.....	70
5.2.1	Degree of organization and cohesion	71
5.2.2	Leadership	72
5.2.3	State sponsors.....	74
5.2.4	Strategy.....	76
5.3	Complex Terrain	76
5.3.1	Geographical Terrain.....	77
5.3.2	Human Terrain	77
5.3.3	Cyberspace	79
5.4	Summary	79

6	ANALYSIS	81
6.1	Identification of a Hybrid Adversary.....	81
6.2	Shortcomings.....	86
7	CONCLUSIONS	90
8	REFERENCES.....	92
8.1	Books.....	92
8.2	Papers and studies	93
8.3	Articles	96
8.4	Presentations	99
8.5	Government publications	99
8.6	Internet news agencies.....	101
8.7	Other.....	101
9	ENCLOSURES.....	103
9.1	Abbreviations	103
9.2	Identifying Emerging Hybrid Threats	105
9.3	Statistics on Taliban	106
9.4	Map of Afghanistan.....	108
9.5	Major Ethnic Groups in Afghanistan	109
9.6	Afghan Tribal Structure	110
9.7	Development of Hezbollah and Taliban with Respect to Time	111

HEZBOLLAH AND TALIBAN – Hybrid Adversaries in Contemporary Conflicts

1 INTRODUCTION

Recognizing threats and potential adversaries play a key role in any conflict, whether it's a state against a state conflict or a state against a group conflict. In this thesis the issue of an adversary is discussed from the American point of view and how to determine the level of threat this particular adversary poses. This will be done within the context of hybrid threat and hybrid warfare by using a model according to which any organization or group can be evaluated and its threat level estimated. This model will be demonstrated by using Hezbollah and tested on Taliban – both organizations involved in contemporary conflicts and wars since beginning of the 21st century.

As President Barack Obama begins his second term as the President of the United States of America, the United States Armed Forces are facing some fundamental changes on the doctrinal level in the forthcoming decade. The Department of Defense's January, 2012, strategic guidance document "*Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense*" outlines key military missions for which the Department of Defense (DOD) will prepare for and thus it gives the guidelines for the development and priorities for the United States Armed Forces to reach the desired state of Joint Forces 2020. The US Armed Forces will be reduced in size and curtailed from the capability of fighting two simultaneous large scale wars to one while "*denying the objectives or imposing unacceptable costs on an opportunistic aggressor in another region*". The overall focus will be shifting towards the Asia-Pacific region to balance the influence projected by China as an emerging regional power. The focus is shifting from the AirLand Battle Concept to the AirSea Battle Concept to face the demands for the military in the Asia-Pacific region. Facing counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, such as faced in Afghanistan and Iraq, will no longer play as important of a role for the US military as they did during the last decade, but rather the importance of more conventional force on force battle is reinstated. The change of focus from AirLand Battle Concept diminishes the role of the US Army, which thus faces reductions in manpower along with budget cuts in the future, and forces it to evaluate its overall role in the AirSea Concept in general.¹

After waging two long wars for over a decade in Afghanistan and Iraq, the weariness and frustration can be seen in the role the Americans are taking in global politics today. It is pulling

¹ Department of Defense: *Sustaining of U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense*, January 2012, pp. 1-2, 4; Scaife, Robert B.: The Regularity of Irregular Warfare, Small Wars Journal, October 16, 2012,

back and allowing, or rather letting its allies take an active role in regional conflicts. This can be seen in Libya and Mali. The Libyan campaign (2011) was carried out primarily by few European NATO countries, because it was in the interests of those countries to deal with it, yet strong military and political support in the background was provided by the U.S. The Mali campaign (2013) is carried out by the French, since France, as an old colonial power, still has many economic interests within the region. Basically the U.S. has no interest to police around the world any more on behalf of other nations to the extent it has done for the last two decades since the Gulf War (1990-1991) – unless it is in its direct interests to do so. Also this lack of interest to take a leading role in military operations, contrary to the past, demonstrates the cautiousness of the United States to get involved in a conflict to begin with; additionally it has no interests whatsoever to get involved in a conflict that could evolve into a hard-to-win insurgency for an unknown, extended period of time. As a proof of this, we can look at Mali. Instead of being sucked into an unpredictable military conflict against spinoff terrorist group of al-Qaeda, the U.S. politicians are more concerned of the domestic economic issues and the fiscal cliff, and let the French take a leading role in it.²

This new approach of the U.S. is creating challenges to its Western allies (i.e. NATO and European countries etc.). European NATO countries and EU member countries have continuously reduced the size of their militaries for over the last 20 years. In the future, when the U.S. is pulling out of Europe, they need to take more responsibility for their defense and the development of the capabilities of their defense forces than they are accustomed to. These countries have relied strongly on the U.S. military power, presence, assistance and proactivity in using military power, which will no longer be a given, permanent status – they have to change from security consumers to security providers. This also means that Europe for that matter has to take more responsibility for the security within its boundaries and areas of interests. Yet according to the Department of Defense strategic guideline document of 2012, the U.S. is not withdrawing its support and will uphold its military commitments to Europe provided that there is a need for it. This can be done with more mobile and capable forces that don't need to be located permanently in Europe. This shift of balance in the thinking of the Western actors in the global security politics may distance these actors from each other, and that could create challenges in the future, if the Europeans feel the U.S. really isn't giving the support it's expected to give.

<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-regularity-of-irregular-warfare>, accessed 22.1.2013.

² Friedman, George: Avoiding the Wars That Never End, Stratfor, Global Intelligence, January 15, 2013, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/avoiding-wars-never-end>, accessed 21.1.2013; Daley, Jane: For President Obama, al-Qaeda is our problem now, *The Telegraph*, January 19, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/algeria/9812783/For-President-Obama-al->

The current stance of the US Armed Forces towards insurgencies and irregular warfare can be described as “unnecessary”, meaning it is unnecessary to focus on them, because the next war will be fought against an enemy equipped alike, a peer against peer or state against state or a conventional war. Is that so? Western militaries and especially the US Armed Forces, while equipping themselves with the most effective technology and weapons, set conventions how to wage war using these effective means. The adversaries will not be able to fight effectively against a western military applying by the same rules and means of warfare as the western militaries do; they will not abide by these conventions (rules of war, Geneva Conventions etc.) To be effective they circumvent these rules of war. In a conflict where a state is facing a group, the group is considered an underdog, and it is expected to bend these conventions or even disregard them entirely. This creates a situation where the state is not fighting against a similarly equipped and behaving “regular” adversary, but rather an “irregular” one. The enemy will use any method available to defeat the western technological superiority, thus making irregular warfare something – kind of a hybrid – that should not be forgotten as obsolete, or counterinsurgency for that matter either. Irregular wars tend to extend in length and may even turn into insurgencies at some point. Furthermore, it can be argued that the Western countries in Europe and North America will be facing this issue while dealing with radical Islam in the Middle East, Africa or even Europe, as we’ve seen very recently: The French made a pre-emptive strike in Mali preventing a radical Islamist group taking over power and control in the area. A spinoff al-Qaeda group al-Mulathanim (“the Masked Ones”) took over 700 hostages in an Algerian gas field and was annihilated by an Algerian army military operation. Had there been more American hostages, the American response can only be speculated. How to deal with the already existing radical Islamist groups or the emerging breakaway groups? Which and where is the next group? How to make an estimate which group will pose a potential threat in the future, and how will that threat be dealt with? Due to the lack of uniform approach by the West, these questions remain unanswered.³

1.1 Hybrid Warfare

The military conflicts the western militaries have been involved with during the first decade of the 21st century turned out to develop in a manner that forced them to reconsider their approaches to handle such conflicts. The Iraq War in (2003-2011) and the campaign in Afghanistan (2001- up to date) initially represented military theories such as Revolution in Military

[Qaeda-is-our-problem-now.html](#), accessed 22.1.2013

³ Scaife; d’Ancona, Matthew: David Cameron had to tackle the future before the past, *The Telegraph*, January, 19, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/al-qaeda/9812782/David-Cameron-had-to-tackle-the-future-before-the-past.html>, accessed 22.1.2013.

Affairs (RMA) and were operationally well executed to the point that the countries were occupied and the opposing force defeated. The use of large numbers of troops and technological advantage gave the western militaries superiority over their adversaries as expected in the doctrines of the time. The aftermath of both campaigns surprised the victors and was anything but “a mission accomplished and problem solved”, having an irrelevant strategic end state posed a problem – having the opposing force was neutralized, territory occupied and Saddam Hussein overthrown, what next?

In both countries, in Iraq and in Afghanistan, the coalition was not prepared for nation building. The coalition forces were unable to provide the defeated nations and populations with political stability, local security and economic development. These are all important factors in gaining the respect and confidence of the residents of territories occupied and fundamental elements to carry out successfully the reconstruction phase of an operation. As a result in both countries coalition forces became involved in insurgencies – something they were not prepared to tackle. In these insurgencies, the different groups the coalition forces faced had different ethnic, political, religious, criminal, or even terrorist agendas. They were ready to use any methods to meet their conflicting goals, even use extreme violence. Their *modus operandi* included “*advanced conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism, and disruptive technologies or criminality.*”⁴

The changing nature of conflicts, the complexity and multimodality, brought up the need to understand better these conflicts the western militaries were involved with. To understand better what was going on, a new descriptive word was brought into the discussion – “hybrid”, eventually leading to a new term in warfare: “hybrid warfare”. It could be described “*as a cocktail of conventional military capabilities, insurgencies, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, organized crime, cyber warfare and advanced military technology. This kind of warfare may also include violations of international laws of war, and will often also include non-state actors and organizations, supported by states with dubious agendas. All these ingredients may be blended together with an equivocal number of ingredients affecting the outcome at the same time. The magnitude of each ingredient may vary significantly during the war depending on the phase of the war or its immediate effectiveness.*”⁵

⁴ Wilkie, Robert: Hybrid Warfare; Something Old, Not Something New, *Air&Space Power Journal*, Winter 2009, volume XXIII, No. 4 ARFP 10-1, <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj09/win09/wilkie.html>, 25.3.2011.

⁵ Huovinen, Kari-Petri Oskari: *HYBRID WARFARE – Just a Twist of Compound Warfare?*, National Defense University, Helsinki, 2011, p. 3.

While the Americans were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan in the rapidly changing operational environment, they were not the only ones facing startling adversaries in the battle field. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) was overtaken by the methods and capabilities of Hezbollah during their Second Lebanon War in the summer of 2006. Hezbollah's military capabilities and ability to adapt to the changing environment was underestimated by the IDF. They were not facing just a poorly organized paramilitary wing of a terrorist organization, but rather a highly motivated, well trained and equipped force with weapons usually seen in the arsenal of nation states, such as advanced anti-tank weapons and long-, mid- and short-range missiles.⁶ The Second Lebanon War is considered the best example of hybrid warfare hitherto.

The debate about this unofficial new form of warfare, hybrid warfare, was carried out during the first decade of the 21st century in a number of western military publications, eventually leading to the need for an official statement on the issue. The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)⁷ published a study named "*Hybrid Warfare*" in September 2010 and with that study it tried to put an end to the discussion about hybrid warfare being a new form of warfare. According to that document, the U.S. Armed Forces were abandoning the term, since according to GAO, in different branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, hybrid warfare was included in the already existing term *full spectrum operations*, and was also included in the existing doctrines on traditional and irregular warfare. Hence GAO concluded hybrid warfare was not to be considered a new form of warfare. Because of that GAO-report there was a possibility that the term would disappear from the official doctrines, field manuals and discussion of the U.S. Armed Forces and the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)⁸ in particular within the next few years.⁹

However, the discussion about hybrid warfare did not stop, nor did the need to re-evaluate the existing doctrines. In February 22, 2011, to answer the need to learn and adapt, the U.S. Ar-

⁶ Kober, Avi: The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War: Why the Poor Performance?, *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1, 3-40, February 2008, pp. 15-16, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402390701785211>, accessed 1.10.2010.

⁷ The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars. Its mission is to support the Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. It provides Congress with timely information that is objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced. <http://www.gao.gov/about/index.html>, accessed 13.11.2012.

⁸ TRADOC's Mission: TRADOC develops the Army's Soldier and Civilian leaders, and designs, develops, and integrates capabilities, concepts and doctrine in order to build an Army that is a versatile mix of tailorable, adaptable, and networked organizations operating on a rotational cycle for Full Spectrum Operations; Support the Army's Human Capital Core Enterprise and sustain the All-Volunteer Force. <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/about.htm#CommandMission>, accessed 10.1.2011.

⁹ United States Government Accountability Office, *Hybrid Warfare*, Washington, D.C., USA, September 10, 2010, pp. 2-3.

my TRADOC published Change 1 of the Field Manual 3-0: “Operations” to replace the earlier edition from 2008. The commanding general of the U.S. Army TRADOC, General Martin E. Dempsey states in the foreword of the new FM 3-0: “Operations”:

*“The future operational environment will be characterized by **hybrid threats**: combinations of regular, irregular, terrorist, and criminal groups who decentralize and syndicate against us and who possess capabilities previously monopolized by nation states. These hybrid threats create a more **competitive security environment**, and it is for these threats we must prepare.”*¹⁰

Hybrid threat was and is now defined officially. This was done to capture the increased complexity of operations and multiplicity of actors involved in the conflicts of today. This complexity was recognized due to the experiences in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and the discussion carried out by military thinkers. The emergence of a hybrid threat in the discussion brings up the thought of a *hybrid adversary*. How could a *hybrid adversary* be defined and detected? A hybrid threat is defined as follows:

*“A hybrid threat is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects.”*¹¹

FM 3-0: Operations, Change 1, describes the nature of a hybrid threat thus opening the door for the definition of a *hybrid adversary*.

1.2 Research questions and Methodology

The purpose of this thesis is to answer the following primary research question:

- Does Taliban fulfill the requirements of a *hybrid adversary* or is it likely to become one according to the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*?

The secondary research questions are:

- What is the historical evolution of Hezbollah and Taliban from the perspective of the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*?
- What are the similarities and differences of Hezbollah and Taliban?
- Does the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* originally represented by Major Christopher O. Bowers (US ARMY) work with Taliban?

¹⁰ Field Manual No 3-0: *Operations*, Change 1, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington , DC, February 22, 2011.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 1-5.

In this thesis a qualitative data analysis is used to analyze the development of Hezbollah and Taliban in historical context with respect to the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*. The information regarding both organizations is based on the analysis of literature and other information available. This thesis supports the so called “Sacramento Model”, which consists of three fundamental questions: what, why and how? Each question needs to be answered first, before moving on to the next question. If an answer to the question is not found, then one must return to the previous question and rephrase before moving on. “What,” in this case being the identification of a *hybrid adversary*. “Why,” because an adversary using irregular warfare is more likely of an opponent in the forthcoming conflicts of the future than a state using conventional warfare, and thus it would be beneficial to identify these kinds of adversaries prior to engaging them or even preventing them from developing into a *hybrid adversary*. “How,” in this case, the identification will be done with the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*.

First, the nature of hybrid warfare and a *hybrid adversary* is demonstrated by using the Second Lebanon War and Hezbollah as an example; showing what kind of an adversary western militaries may face in conflicts of today, since Hezbollah is considered the best example of an organization applying *hybrid warfare* in practice. This part of the thesis draws heavily on the thesis written by the author Senior Staff Officer Course in 2011.

Second, the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* is introduced using Hezbollah as an example organization. Then Taliban, a well-known organization of a contemporary conflict in Afghanistan, is presented as a case study of a potential *hybrid adversary*. By comparing these two organizations in the context of *hybrid adversary* model, the similarities and differences of these two organizations are pointed out and conclusions drawn whether Taliban fits in the model or not, and how it should develop, if it was to fit in the model.

In the last part of this thesis the research questions are answered and the applicability of this model to these two organizations discussed, and to Taliban in particular and to other organizations for that matter. The reliability of this model is also pondered in the end in addition to the potential flaws and needed adjustments in it.

1.3 Frame of Reference and Limitations

In order to understand the concept of *hybrid adversary* and hybrid threat one must familiarize with the terminology around the concept of hybrid warfare. Different types of warfare have been discussed and debated in the military literature over the last 30 years, such as conventional warfare, irregular warfare, compound warfare, asymmetric warfare and hybrid warfare.

The natures of the conflicts the western militaries have been involved with during this time period have shaped the thoughts on warfare.

Let us first define different types of warfare.

Conventional warfare can be described as the kind of war two or more states wage against each other, using their regular forces and national armies to reach their respective political or military goals. These armies fight battles and follow the rules of war, at least to some degree, and the warring parties expect their counterparts to abide by these rules.¹²

Irregular warfare is a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will.¹³ Irregular warfare includes acts of terrorism, insurgency and other unconventional methods, as well as the countermeasures for each i.e. counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.¹⁴

Compound warfare is the simultaneous use of a regular or main force and an irregular or guerilla force against an enemy. In other words, the compound warfare operator increases his military leverage by applying both conventional and unconventional force at the same time.¹⁵ It is a combination of conventional and irregular warfare, including elements of both to reach the common goal.

The term *asymmetric warfare* describes an alternative way to fight a war, a way for a weaker party to counter the stronger opponent. In asymmetric warfare the weaker party uses his own strengths to strike at the enemy's characteristic weaknesses. So-called unconventional or unorthodox tactics are typically included in the weaker party's toolbox. The approach includes surprise and unpredictability. The weaker party tries to deny the stronger party of the ability to use his strengths and countermeasures effectively by forcing him to fight in unfavorable circumstances. Asymmetric warfare can be seen to include irregular and hybrid features of warfare, but as a term it is not clearly defined.¹⁶

¹² Huovinen, p. 7.

¹³ Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms: Joint Publication 1-02, 12 April 2001, amended September 30, 2010.

¹⁴ Huovinen, p. 7.

¹⁵ Huber, Thomas M.: *Compound Warfare: That Fatal Knot*, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2002, p. 1.

¹⁶ Huovinen, p. 8.

Hybrid warfare is well described by Rear Admiral Chris Parry (retired) of the Royal Navy in the text “Countering Irregular Activity within a Comprehensive Approach” in the following manner:

*“Hybrid warfare is conducted by irregular forces that have access to the more sophisticated weapons and systems normally fielded by regular forces. Hybrid warfare may morph and adapt throughout an individual campaign, as circumstances and resources allow. It is anticipated that irregular groups will continue to acquire sophisticated weapons and technologies and that intervention forces will need to confront a variety of threats that have in the past been associated primarily with the regular Armed Forces of states.”*¹⁷

To make *hybrid warfare* more comprehensive than the other types of warfare mentioned before it is reinforced with elements of criminality and cyber warfare. But with the term *hybrid warfare* one must be cautious how to use it, since it is expected of an adversary fighting as an underdog to use any means available to reach its objectives, thus making it fitting to the description mentioned above, but not necessarily an actual hybrid threat. If everybody uses the methods of *hybrid warfare*, then everybody is hybrid or the other way around – nobody is. Perhaps because of this analogy, *hybrid warfare* should be officially defined.

Now the different types of warfare involved in this thesis are defined. Next let us define hybrid threats and from there on hybrid adversaries. The U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0: Operations defines hybrid threats as follows:

*“A hybrid threat is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects. Hybrid threats combine regular forces governed by international law, military tradition, and custom with unregulated irregular forces that act with no restrictions on violence or their targets. These forces could include militias, terrorists, guerillas, and criminals. Such forces combine their abilities to use and transition between regular and irregular tactics and weapons. These abilities enable hybrid threats to capitalize on perceived vulnerabilities making them particularly effective.”*¹⁸

When determining the hybrid threat, the full scale of methods available and used is emphasized throughout the FM3-0: “Operations”. This includes criminality, media, sophisticated

¹⁷ Wilkie, p. 1.

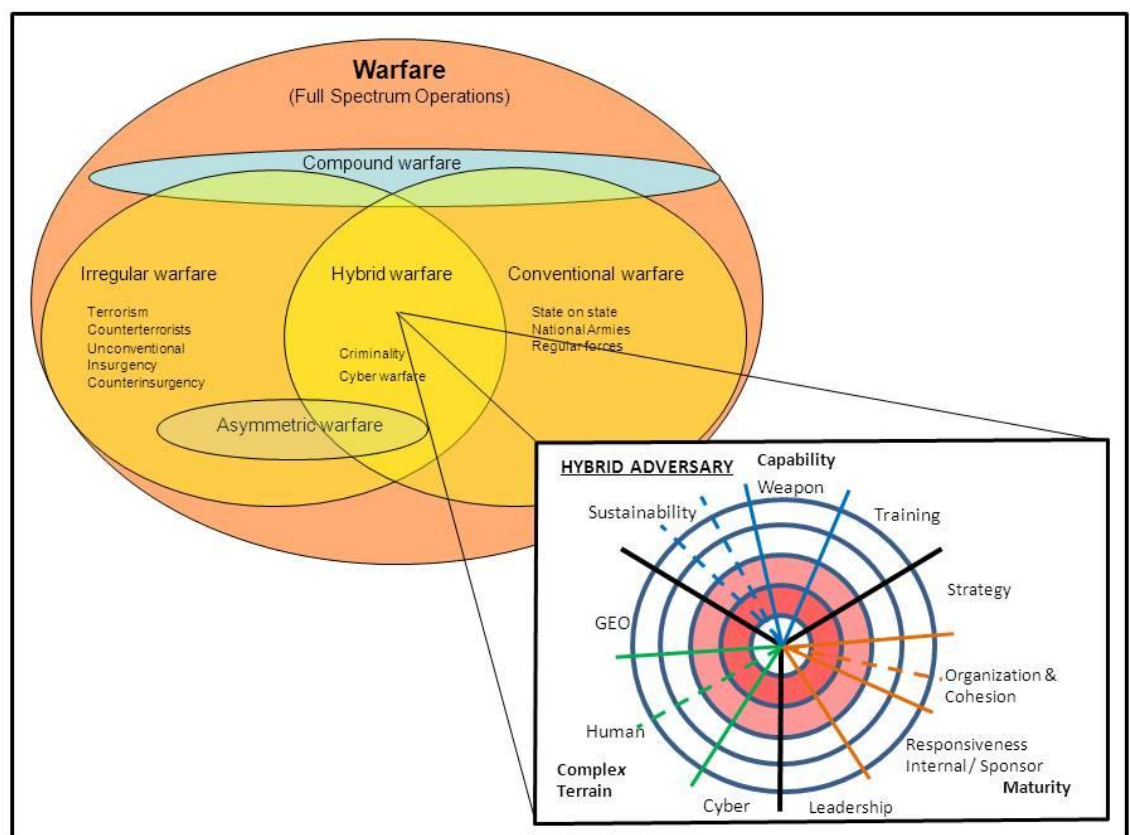
¹⁸ FM 3-0: *Operations*, Ch 1, p. 1-5.

weapons, technology, command and control systems, cyber activities, use of combined arms tactics, and both political and social infrastructure to their advantage. It is also recognized that a hybrid threat might use global networks effectively to cause global awareness for the conflict.¹⁹

Hybrid threat has been discussed in a number of manuals, articles and academic papers, but all they lack a concrete example or a model of how to determine who is or will be a hybrid threat. The purpose of this thesis is to provide a tool, the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*.

The frame of reference in this thesis is presented in Figure 1. The concepts of warfare have been drawn into a single picture and a *hybrid adversary* is derived from hybrid warfare. The more precise composition of a *hybrid adversary* is presented in Figure 2.

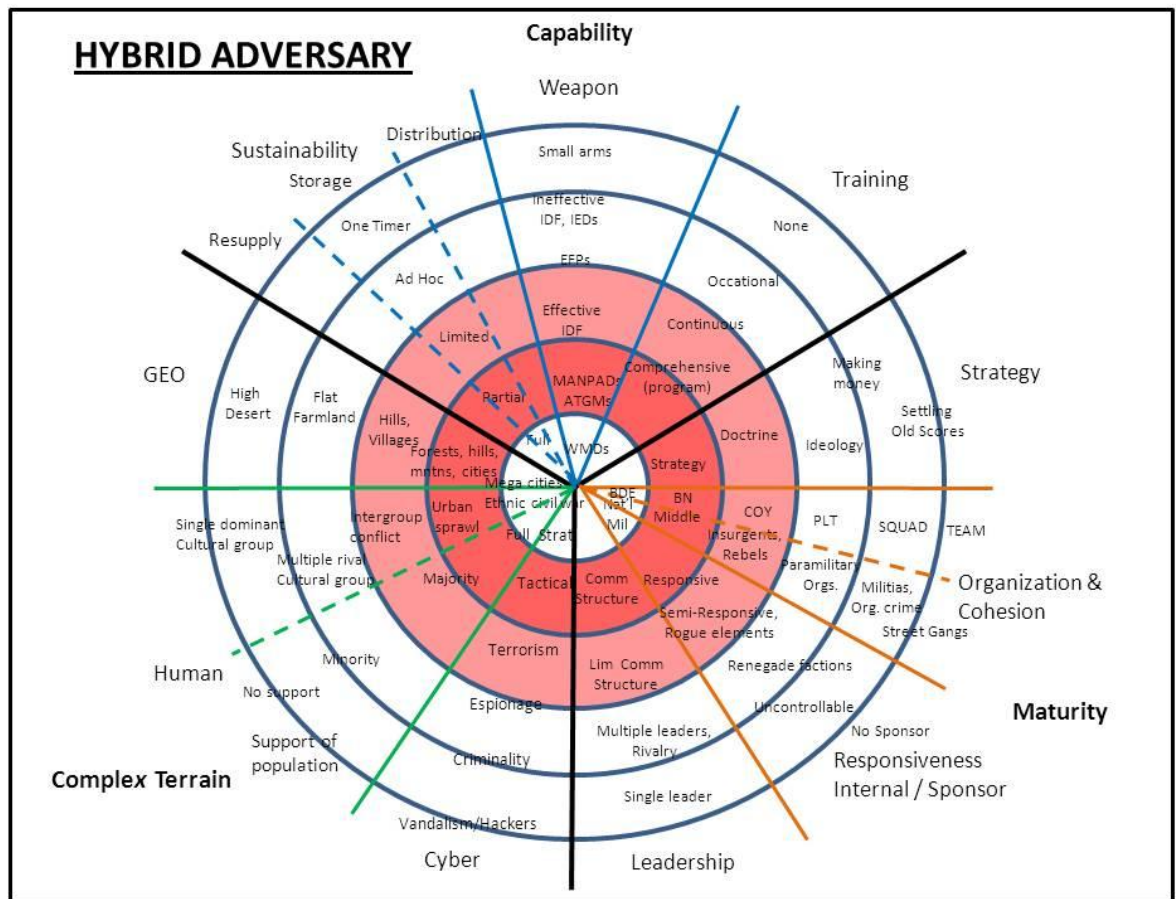
Figure 1: Hybrid Warfare and *Hybrid Adversary*.²⁰



¹⁹ Ibid, p. 1-5

²⁰ This frame of reference is a developed version and influenced by the thesis work of the author (Huovinen, p. 9), and the article written by Bowers, Christopher O.: Identifying Emerging Hybrid Threats, *Parameters*, Spring 2012, p. 42.

When determining a *hybrid adversary*, three core variables emerge: *capability*, *maturity* and *complex terrain*. Each of these core variables can be divided into sub-variables. *Capability* can be divided into three sub-variables, namely weapon, training and sustainability. *Maturity* can be divided into four sub-variables, namely strategy, organization and cohesion, responsiveness to internal and external sponsor, and lastly leadership. *Complex terrain* includes the geographical aspect and the people involved, but takes into account the cyberspace present everywhere these days. All these sub-variables can be broken down to smaller entities, which can be seen in figure 2. When a group or an organization is studied in this framework, across these variables, it is located somewhere along the circle in each entity. The closer a group or an organization gets to the light red or darker red marked area towards the center of the circle, the more potential it has to become or it already is a hybrid threat in a possible conflict within that area of its influence. If a group moves within the center of the circle in one or more sub-variables, it has lost the leverage of hybrid kind in that particular entity, and as a result it may even lose the edge of becoming or being a hybrid threat at all. It is possible to move “up and down” within one or more sub-variables, even core variables along the circle, meaning the edge of hybridity can be both achieved and lost. This model to determine a hybrid threat presented by Major Christopher O. Bowers will be discussed and explained in further detail in chapter 3 of this thesis.

Figure 2: *Hybrid adversary*²¹

In this thesis the concept of hybrid threat and *hybrid adversary* is discussed. The focus will be on the perspective of the United States Armed Forces. This is because the concept of hybrid threat was brought into the discussion by American military thinkers as a result of the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan and the discussion about hybrid warfare. Hybrid threat being the descendant of the debate about the hybrid warfare prior to the official definition of hybrid threat in FM 3-0: Operations. The United States of America represents the largest military power in the world today, it exercises this power every day, and it dominates the research and discussion about theoretical military thinking in general, thus making the American point of view relevant and obvious.

Two organizations, namely Hezbollah and Taliban are studied in this thesis in the context of the model represented earlier. These two organizations are chosen, because of their relevance in the conflicts of today. Hezbollah is considered as the most advanced terrorist organization of the world that has developed over time to a respectable adversary by any measure. Its per-

²¹ This picture is a modified and expanded version of the model MAJ Bowers presents in his article “Identifying Emerging Hybrid Threats” (Bowers, p. 42). See Enclosure 9.2.

formance in the Second Lebanon War (2006) is considered a text book example of hybrid warfare. The entire hybrid threat concept can be applied to it easily and it can be argued that it has had an enormous effect in the development of the concept. Furthermore, Hezbollah has played a significant role in the creation of the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* that is presented, developed and tested in this thesis, thus making it a necessary choice to further explain the model.²² Taliban, on the other hand, represents an organization that has many similarities yet differences with Hezbollah, and gets a lot of press time due to the large and long Western coalition campaign in Afghanistan. The Western militaries have been operating in Afghanistan over ten years without being able to strip the Taliban of arms and remove them from the power behind the scenes. The fact that there are Finnish troops deployed to both Lebanon and Afghanistan makes both organizations relevant choices from the perspective of the Finnish military as well. In this thesis the focus is only on the Taliban movement in Afghanistan, and that will not include other Taliban groups based in Pakistan such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. Either the term Taliban or Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) is used when discussing the Afghan Taliban movement.

Only these two organizations are examined due to the limited time available. They are studied in the historical context up to date with respect to the model introduced. The historical studying of Hezbollah is limited to start from 1970's up to date and with Taliban from the 1990's up to date. If needed, the history prior to these dates will be briefly discussed. With neither Hezbollah nor Taliban, their modus operandi in the battle field is not presented in absolute detail, but rather stayed with larger entities. Nor are any courses of action discussed that should be taken provided that a Taliban, or any organization for that matter, fits the *hybrid adversary* model.

The references for this thesis are public, and mainly accessible through internet. No classified documents are used, because it is not necessary to go that much into detail due to the nature of the model tested.

1.4 References

Hybrid warfare has been an inspiration to a number of articles in western military magazines since the emergence of the term. It has inspired particularly American military thinkers and the best known advocate for hybrid warfare is Mr. Frank Hoffman, a former United States Marine Corps officer. He has written a number of articles and just to name one, a paper called

²² Email exchange between MAJ Christopher E. Bowers and the author in November 2012.

“Conflict in the 21st century: Rise of Hybrid Wars”²³ is a profound introduction to the modern day warfare and the development of hybrid warfare. Hybrid warfare has also been an inspiration for a large number of academic studies done in graduate and post-graduate schools of western militaries, from William J. Nemeth’s “Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid War”²⁴ to author’s own Senior Staff Officer Course thesis “Hybrid Warfare: Just a Twist of Compound Warfare”²⁵. In some recent articles and studies there are arguments presented for the need to officially define hybrid warfare, although hybrid warfare is not officially defined by TRADOC or any other branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. The debate seems to go on.

Hybrid threat and the operational environment are discussed in detail in the existing field manuals, most of them dealing with counterinsurgency (COIN). As mentioned before, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0: Operations, Change 1 (Feb22, 2011) defines hybrid threat and discusses it in detail.

Dr. David E. Johnson, who is currently the Director, Chief of Staff of the Army Strategic Studies Group, has written while a senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation the monograph “Hard Fighting: Israel in Lebanon and Gaza”²⁶ dealing with the Second Lebanon War (2006) and the Operation Cast Lead (2008). He discusses the implications of the IDF experiences in these two wars to the U.S. Armed Forces. He also discusses the nature of hybrid adversaries, in this case Hezbollah and Hamas, providing thus important discussion regarding this thesis. Dr. Johnson has also written a number of works about hybrid “middle range” threats and he provides valuable information about the Second Lebanon War (2006), Hezbollah and hybrid threats in general.

Dr. Russell Glenn, a senior defense and political analyst with RAND Corporation has written “Thoughts on “Hybrid” Conflict”²⁷ and “All Glory Is Fleeting; Insights from the Second Lebanon War”²⁸, both providing worthwhile discussion about hybrid warfare, hybrid threats and experiences of the Second Lebanon War.

²³ Hoffman, Frank G.: *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*, Arlington, Virginia, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007.

²⁴ Nemeth, William J.: “*Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid War*”, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, June 2002.

²⁵ Huovinen, Kari-Petri Oskari: *HYBRID WARFARE – Just a Twist of Compound Warfare?*, National Defense University, Helsinki, 2011.

²⁶ Johnson, David E.: *Hard Fighting: Israel in Lebanon and Gaza*, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, CA, USA, 2011a, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a555762.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012.

²⁷ Glenn, Russell W.: Thoughts on “Hybrid” Conflict, Small Wars Journal, 2009, <http://www.google.fi/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CEYQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsmallwarsjournal.com%2Fmag%2Fdocs-temp%2F188-glenn.pdf&ei=neMxUMzgOcr64QSS-4DADQ&usg=AFQjCNF7FmC5ogZJHvdg0KfEnLQkZAGoUA>, accessed 20.8.2012.

²⁸ Glenn, Russell W.: *All Glory Is Fleeting; Insights from the Second Lebanon War*, RAND Corporation, Santa

Hybrid adversary and the problem of defining one, was the inspiration of an article written by U.S. Army Major Christopher O. Bowers in *Parameters*, a U.S. Army senior professional journal. In his article “Identifying Emerging Hybrid Adversaries”²⁹, he discusses the dangers of a fighting force of irregular type possessing advanced military capabilities normally associated only with nation states, and thus posing an international security risk. He offers a model to detect possible hybrid adversaries or emerging ones. This article has been the inspiration for this thesis and this thesis will test the model created by MAJ Bowers.

Hezbollah and Taliban have both been an inspiration for a large number of studies and books over the last decade. The Second Lebanon War (2006), as mentioned earlier, is considered the best example of hybrid warfare, and Hezbollah an example of an organization to carry out a hybrid war. Avi Kober’s article, “The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War: Why the Poor Performance?” provides the background for the chapter dealing with an example of a hybrid war, the capitalizing threat of hybrid kind. It describes the multiple challenges faced by today’s Western militaries when fighting an opponent fitting the model represented by Major Bowers.³⁰

Mr. Anthony H. Cordesman’s study “Preliminary ‘Lessons’ of the Israeli-Hezbollah War”³¹ from 2006, and a presentation “The Lessons of the Israeli-Lebanon War”³² from 2008, provide compact picture of the failures and successes of both Hezbollah and Israel in the war. The newer presentation has more accurate information on the war since more reliable data has been available. Mr. Cordesman holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) and has received a Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal for his work.³³ The Winograd Commission Final Report reveals the official results of the Israeli investigation of the Second Lebanon War 2006, and thus provides the Israeli view on the war as far as successes and failures are concerned.³⁴

Background for Hezbollah is provided by Mr. Eitan Azani’s “Hezbollah – The Story of the Party of God”³⁵. Mr. Azani presents an Israeli view on Hezbollah, since he is the Deputy Di-

Monica, CA, USA, 2012, <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG708-1.html>, accessed 15.2.2013

²⁹ Bowers, pp. 39-50.

³⁰ Kober, p. 7.

³¹ Cordesman, Anthony H: *Preliminary “Lessons” of the Israeli-Hezbollah War*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., USA, 2006.

³² Cordesman, Anthony H: *The Lessons of the Israeli-Lebanon War*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, USA, 2008.

³³ <http://csis.org/expert/anthony-h-cordesman>, accessed 13.11.2012.

³⁴ Winograd Commission Final Report, January 30, 2008, Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.crf.org/publication/15385/winograd_commission_final_report.html, accessed 7.12.2010.

³⁵ Azani, Eitan: *Hezbollah – The Story of the Party of God*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England, (2009) 2011.

rector of the international Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Inter Disciplinary Center in Israel. The American view is presented by Mr. Augustus Richard Norton, a professor of international relations and anthropology at Boston University and a former U.S. Army officer and West Point professor, in his book “Hezbollah”³⁶. Mr. Joseph Alegha’s book “Hizbullah – Identity Construction”³⁷ contradicts some statements made by Mr. Norton. Mr. Alegha has written a number of books on Hezbollah and is an associate professor of the Islamic studies at Radboud University Nijmegen, Netherlands, thus presenting likely a more neutral view. Nicholas Blanford’s book, “Warriors of God; Inside Hezbollah’s Thirty-Year Struggle Against Israel”, is a valuable book based on his 15 year experience on Hezbollah providing the background of Hezbollah’s ideology, motivations, training and tactics over the thirty years of development of the organization.

The history and background of Taliban as a powerful religious organization shaping Afghanistan’s past and future is provided by the book called “The Taliban and the Crises of Afghanistan”³⁸ edited by Mr. Robert D. Crews and Mr. Amin Tarzi. Mr. Crews is an assistance professor of History at Stanford University and Mr. Tarzi is the director of Middle East Studies at Marine Corps University. Their book also discusses the errors made by the American intervention and the reconstruction of Afghanistan during the first decade of the 21st century. Another worthy source for background information about Taliban and the ideology behind it is the report written by Ms. Anne Stenersen for Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI). In her report “The Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan – organization, leadership and worldview”³⁹ she discusses the role of Taliban in the post-2001 Afghan insurgency and its organizational characteristics.

There are many academic works and articles done on both Hezbollah and Taliban in the military schools and magazines. The full list of references is presented in Chapter 8: References.

³⁶ Norton, Augustus Richard: *Hezbollah*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, USA, 2007.

³⁷ Alegha, Joseph: *Hizbullah’s Identity Construction*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2011.

³⁸ Crews, Robert D. & Tarzi, Amin: *The Taliban and the Crises in Afghanistan*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2008.

³⁹ Stenersen, Anne: *The Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan – organization, leadership and worldview*, Norwegian Defence Establishment (FFI), February 5, 2010, http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/FFI_TheTalibanInsurgencyInAfghanistan_OrganizationLeadershipWorldview.pdf, accessed 20.8.2012.

2 HYBRID WAR – HEZBOLLAH IN SECOND LEBANON WAR

In this chapter the Second Lebanon War of 2006 is discussed as an example of hybrid war, and Hezbollah introduced as a potential adversary in a hybrid war – a *hybrid adversary* – the sort of adversary western militaries may face in the future.

2.1 Hezbollah

Hezbollah is a Shia Muslim political group with a militant wing called the Islamic Resistance. Hezbollah is defined as a terrorist organization by the West. The group is active in Lebanon, and can be described as a “state-within-a-state”. Along with the activities of its military wing, Hezbollah is also a major provider of social services, operating schools, hospitals, and agricultural services for thousands of Lebanese Shias. It has participated actively in the Lebanese political system since 1992 - having had over the recent years from two to eleven out of thirty seats in the Lebanese national unity cabinet. Hezbollah operates a satellite TV channel, al-Manar, and a broadcast station - both are in the West regarded as terrorist entities. Ideological and financial support for the organization is provided by Iran and Syria; in addition Hezbollah raises funds from criminal activities, such as counterfeiting money and drug production and trade.⁴⁰

2.1.1 Background

The seeds for Hezbollah were planted among the Lebanese Shias in the late 1970's as a result of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1977), and two Israeli campaigns in Lebanon in 1978 and 1982. Hezbollah was to counter the Amal Movement, the largest Shia organization in Lebanon at the time. It was a new organization, separate from PLO or other Palestinian groups operating in the area. In 1982, a group of Lebanese Shia Muslims declared themselves to be the “Party of God” (Hizb Allah), as a response to the Israeli invasions of Lebanon. Islamic resistance units were formed and were committed to the liberation of the occupied territories and the ejection of the Israeli forces. As soon as it was realized that the Israel Defense Forces

⁴⁰ Ching, Jennifer and Toiba, Michael: Hezbollah (a.k.a. Hizbollah, Hizbu'llah), Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.cfr.org/lebanon/hezbollah-k-hizbollah-hizbullah/p9155>, accessed 25.2.2011, p. 1; [Hezbollah](#); Profile of the Lebanese Shiite Terrorist Organization of Global Reach Sponsored by Iran and Supported by Syria, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S), July 2003, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/ENGLISH/IRAN/PDF/JULY_03.PDF, accessed 25.2.2011, pp. 141-149; Addis, Casey & Blanchard, Christopher M.: *Hezbollah: Background and Issues for Congress*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, USA, <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/150207.pdf>, accessed 21.8.2012, p.1; Mellies, Penny L.: Hamas and Hezbollah: A Comparison of Tactics at Farquhar, Scott C et al: *Back to Basics: A Study of the Second Lebanon War and Operation CAST LEAD*, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS, USA, 2009, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a498599.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012, pp. 54-55.

(IDF) intended to stay in South Lebanon, the (at that time inexperienced) Hezbollah resistance cells began to develop its military competence with the desire to resist the Israeli occupation. It was assisted both ideologically and logistically by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards based in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley - originally sent there to aid in the resistance against Israel. Hezbollah began developing its popular base in Lebanon, and has over the years expanded and strengthened both its political and military capacity.⁴¹

Hezbollah draws inspiration from the Iranian Revolution, and it is dedicated to the creation of an Iranian style Islamic republic in Lebanon, and the removal of all non-Islamic influences from the area. It is strongly anti-Western and especially anti-Israel in its ideology. Since the organization was founded it has received substantial support from Iran and Syria, both financial and military training support. The affiliation between Iran and Hezbollah has always been a close one. There is a strong religious and ideological tie between Iran and Hezbollah – both being Shia Muslims. Iran has had a great effect on Hezbollah's improved capabilities by delivering vital material and moral support to Hezbollah over the years.⁴²

Syria on the other hand has been, and still is a close supporter of Hezbollah. There are two main reasons for Syria to support Hezbollah. Syria has had its own conflicts and confrontations with Israel over the occupation of Golan Heights and it has had interests to look after in Lebanon, both of which still exist. Thus Hezbollah served as a useful tool for Syria in the regions' political field. In the light of the recent Syrian conflict of the rebel effort to topple the regime of Bashar Assad, there are reports of Hezbollah actively participating in the support of Assad's regime in Syria. Syria is of great interest to Hezbollah due to the substantial support it has received in the military built up over the years, and it is the main conduit for the weapons and ammunition from Iran.⁴³

Hezbollah is a Shia Muslim organization in which religion plays an important political role. Shias differ from Sunni Muslims in the way they look at leadership, not the spiritual aspect of religion. Shias believe their leadership, either religious or political – which often go hand in

⁴¹ Hizballah / Hizbollah / Hizbullah / Hezbollah, Global Security, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/hizballah.htm>, accessed 25.2.2011, p. 1.; Hezbollah, the 'Party of God', Israel News, 2006, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3284023,00.html>, accessed 25.3.2011, pp. 1-2; Who are Hezbollah?, BBC News, 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4314423.stm, accessed 25.3.2011, pp. 1-2; Coburn, Matthew D.: *Irregular Techniques for Controlling Under-Governed Space*, Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, CA, USA, 2007, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a475826.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012, pp. 15-18.

⁴² Ching (Toiba), p. 1-2, Hizballah, p. 1; Johnson, D.E. (2011a), p. 11, 154.

⁴³ BBC News, p. 1; Hezbollah: Portrait of a Terrorist Organization, The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israeli Intelligence & Commemoration Center, December 18, 2012, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art_20436/E_158_12_1231723028.pdf, accessed 3.1.2013, pp. 19-24.

hand – descend directly from the family of the Prophet Mohammad or God himself. Therefore among the Shias, Imams are considered sinless by nature and their authority infallible since it comes directly from God or the family of the Prophet. Hence the leaders are highly respected, and their authority unquestioned. Among the Muslims Shias are a minority with approximately 15% of the Muslim population of the world. The attitude towards the divine authority of Shia Imam's explains how Shia organizations may turn fanatical and be considered to behave like terrorist organizations in the West.⁴⁴

2.1.2 Early Terrorist Campaigns

Once established as a militia, Hezbollah received acclaim and legitimacy in Lebanon and throughout the Muslim world by fighting against the IDF and the South Lebanese Army (SLA). Its base areas were, and still are, Lebanon's Shiite dominated areas, parts of Beirut, Southern Lebanon and Bekaa Valley. Aside from its activities in Lebanon, in 1980's and early 1990's Hezbollah conducted a global terrorist strategy with a capability to operate all over the world, and they carried out terrorist attacks against Israeli and US targets. Hezbollah focused on South America, Southeast Asia, Jordan, the Persian Gulf, and the European continent.⁴⁵

During the 1980's and early 1990's, Hezbollah was behind a series of terrorist attacks against Western targets such as a suicide bombings of the U.S. embassy in Beirut (1983), U.S. Marines base in Beirut (1983), the U.S. Embassy Annex in Beirut (1984), aircraft hijackings (Trans World Airlines 1985, Kuwaiti Airlines 1984 and 1988), the attack on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina (1992) and a number of kidnappings of U.S. and European civilians as well as French, British, German and Russian diplomats. Hezbollah was responsible for most of the kidnappings of foreign nationals carried out in Lebanon during that time period (at least 18 citizens of Western countries were held hostage, and three of them were killed). It is said that Hezbollah acted as Iranian proxy, and was thus heavily influenced, even its actions directed by Iran over this period of time. In the 1990's, following a shift in Iranian policy, Hezbollah lowered the profile of its anti-Western pursuits and focused its attention on terrorist activity against Israeli and Jewish targets.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ What's the Difference Between Shia and Sunni Muslims? http://islam.about.com/cs/divisions/f/shia_sunni.htm, accessed 25.3.2011.

⁴⁵ Hezbollah (2003), p. 64; Hezbollah (2012), pp. 91-126.

⁴⁶ Hezbollah (2003), pp. 64- 65.

In the beginning of the 21st century, there was an increasing cooperation between Hezbollah and other Palestinian terrorist organizations in the region.⁴⁷ It was very active against the IDF during the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in May 2000. Focus was transferred to violent activities in Israeli territory with the aim to disrupt any attempt for dialogue, or the peace process in general.⁴⁸

However, since the September 11, 2001 attacks, Hezbollah made considerable efforts to promote its image in order to blur its identity as a terrorist organization. It publicly denied its involvement in terrorism in general, and in particular, its capability of global terrorism.⁴⁹ Yet despite the Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah continued periodically to shell Israeli forces in the disputed Shebaa Farms border zone resulting a periodic conflict and retaliation from Israel.⁵⁰ In the end of 2005, Hezbollah and the IDF had a heavy exchange of fire across the Blue Line established by the UN Security Council resolutions 425 and 426 for the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000. Both sides used heavy weapons against each other. Since the withdrawal of IDF from Lebanon, Hezbollah had built its military capabilities substantially with the support of Iran and Syria.⁵¹

The Taif Accord in 1989 ended the Lebanese Civil War. The fighting of numerous sectarian militias, including Hezbollah and AMAL (the rival of Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon) was stopped by Syria and Iran. Syrian forces occupied Lebanon and could have destroyed Hezbollah militarily, but instead Hezbollah convinced Syria's President Assad that Hezbollah would be a useful resistance force against Israel. Thus, heavily influenced by Syria, the Lebanese administration accepted Hezbollah as the only militia organization in Lebanon, whereas all other ethnic militias were to be dismantled. Along with the weakness of the Lebanese central regime, Hezbollah's special status enabled the organization to use its power and seize both military and civilian control in Southern Lebanon (and several areas of the Bekaa region), practically replacing the legitimate Lebanese regime. This process continued even after the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon. Southern Lebanon had in fact turned into a *state-within-a-state*. Hezbollah thus became the ultimate authority in this region, undisturbed by the Lebanese regime's weak control, which focused mainly on economic development projects that were themselves approved by Hezbollah. Hezbollah pursued its own policy in southern Lebanon, which it imposed on the Lebanese government. It opposed the effective deployment of the Lebanese army in the South thus preventing the Lebanese regime from assuming responsi-

⁴⁷ Hizballah, p. 3, and Hezbollah (2003), pp. 96-99.

⁴⁸ Hizballah, p. 2.

⁴⁹ Hezbollah (2003), p. 65.

⁵⁰ Hizballah, p. 4.

bility for this region's security and implementing its sovereignty. According to the resolution 425 of the UN Security Council, the Lebanese army was to deploy in the South of the country. However, receiving strong support from Syria, Hezbollah openly rejected the deployment of Lebanese Army to the South, and carried on as before.⁵²

The Shia community had been the largest, and yet the most underprivileged ethnic community in Lebanon. For Hezbollah this created a fertile soil for gaining support with an extensive social and economic program, since the Lebanese government had lacked the initiative to improve the situation. Far-reaching social and welfare activities were carried out by Hezbollah, including schools, women's affairs, health and medical services, social welfare and religious education. All these were financed by the funds received from international fundraisers and its support from Iran and Syria. Unsurprisingly, Hezbollah earned the trust and support of the Shia community as well as some non-Shias. The social and economic programs served Hezbollah's aims to gain political power in Lebanon and its ultimate goal of forming an Islamic republic in Lebanon.⁵³

2.2 Background To The Second Lebanon War

After the withdrawal of IDF from Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah kept close ties to Iran and Syria and began arming itself. High quality weapons, such as land-to-land rockets, anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles, mines and mortar rounds as well as explosives, small arms and ammunition, were being smuggled to Lebanon.⁵⁴ The tensions were high in the region and occasional clashes with IDF occurred. In September 2004 the UN Security Council resolution 1559 called for the Lebanese government to disband and disarm all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and to prevent the flow of armaments and other military equipment to the militias from Syria, Iran and other nations. The Lebanese government did not comply with the resolution – Hezbollah was very popular among the Shiites, it had built a considerable military strength, and it did not want the Lebanese army in the Southern Lebanon – Hezbollah territory.⁵⁵ The November 2005 clash between Hezbollah and IDF, in its shortness and intensity, was like a prologue to the Second Lebanon War the following year.⁵⁶ The military and financial support Hezbollah received from Iran and Syria did not go unnoticed by the international community. As late as mid April 2006, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called on

⁵¹ Hizballah, p. 4; Coburn, pp. 39-40.

⁵² Hezbollah (2003), pp. 132-133; Coburn, pp. 22-24; Addis & Blanchard, pp. 9-10.

⁵³ Hezbollah (2003), pp. 136-137; Coburn, pp. 41-44.

⁵⁴ Hezbollah (2003), pp. 108-116.

⁵⁵ Cordesman (2006), p. 10.

⁵⁶ Hizballah, p. 4.

Syria and Iran to stop interfering in Lebanon. But the situation had already developed for the worse.⁵⁷

2.3 A Retaliatory Campaign Escalating to a War

The 33-day long Second Lebanon War was initiated by the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah near Shtula on the Lebanese-Israeli border on July 12, 2006. The kidnapping Hezbollah unit had crossed the border during a diversion attack of Katyusha rockets and mortar rounds against the border villages and IDF positions. Israel responded and launched a large-scale retaliatory operation which eventually escalated into a war.⁵⁸

The war that ended in a ceasefire agreement on August 13, 2006, can be divided into three phases, seen from the Israeli point of view.

- Phase I: Air campaign (July 12-16)
- Phase II: Engagement of ground forces (July 18 – August 11)
- Phase III: Final push (August 12-13)

The first phase of the Israeli retaliatory operation began with a massive use of Israel Air Force (IAF). The IDF imposed air and sea blockades on Lebanon. The IAF attacked suspected Hezbollah command posts in Beirut, including military targets along the Beirut – Damascus highway and elsewhere, and tried to destroy the long-range missile launchers used by Hezbollah against Northern Israel. Israel refrained from bombing Lebanese infrastructure, although the IDF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Halutz had suggested that, thus imposing itself restrictions to conduct the operation. Israel also avoided a direct confrontation with Syria, despite the support it gave to Hezbollah. Within the first two days of the war, the IAF destroyed most of the Hezbollah's medium and long-range missile launchers, along with the Hezbollah command centers in Beirut. Yet the Israeli retaliatory campaign faced a surprise, when a missile corvette INS Hanith, one of Israel's newest and most capable ships, while monitoring the naval blockade, was hit with an anti-ship missile fired by Hezbollah.⁵⁹ Lebanese government asked for a ceasefire on July 14, which was turned down few days later.⁶⁰

According to Kober, this was the culmination point of the operation – the efficiency of the air campaign would only get worse as the time went on. The situation could not be solved with air assets alone. This was recognized in the IDF high command, and on July 16, the IDF Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Moshe Kaplinski recommended stopping the operation,

⁵⁷ Hizbollah, p. 4.

⁵⁸ Kober, p. 3; Johnson, D. E (2011a), p 54-55.

⁵⁹ Cordesman (2008), p. 47-48; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 66.

but the highest political and military leaders thought otherwise. Thus the retaliatory operation started to escalate into a war.⁶¹

In the beginning of the operation the Israeli political and military leadership was both confused and indecisive of the objectives and methods to reach them.⁶² As an example, the IDF Chief of Staff was initially thinking of the operation “in terms of a retaliatory attack, not war”, and even instructed his subordinates at the General Staff level not to use the term “war” regarding the operation.⁶³ In retrospect, it can be concluded that Israel had five objectives in the war:

- Destroy the “Iranian Western Command” before Iran could develop nuclear weapons.
- Restore credibility of the Israeli deterrence after the withdrawals from Lebanon (2000) and Gaza (2005).
- Try to force Lebanon to act as an accountable state, including the end of Hezbollah’s “state-with-in-state” status.
- Damage or cripple Hezbollah while understanding it could not be destroyed as a military force, and would continue to be a major political player in Lebanon.
- Bring the two captured soldiers without major trades of prisoners held by Israel.⁶⁴

Although the operation was initially thought to be carried out based on an air campaign, a reserve infantry division was mobilized as early as on July 13 (eventually, three more infantry divisions were mobilized).⁶⁵ Regardless of the damage inflicted on the Hezbollah long-range missiles and launcher arsenal, Hezbollah still had the capability to fire hundreds of short-range rockets a day into Northern Israel. This caused serious, but above all, moral damage to the Israeli civilian population living in the area. It was now finally understood by Israel’s political and military leadership that the war could not be won without the ground element, and it felt forced to commit ground forces into battle, with the mission of destroying Hezbollah’s positions along the Israel-Lebanon border.⁶⁶

On July 18, the second phase began – IDF committed ground forces in battle in Southern Lebanon. The Israeli forces attacked head on against the Hezbollah forces in Southern Lebanon, uncharacteristically to its tradition of mechanized warfare of outflanking and encircling the

⁶⁰ Johnson, D. E. (2011a), pp. 59-61.

⁶¹ Kober, p. 4; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 61-62.

⁶² Winograd Commission Final Report, points 13-17.

⁶³ Kober, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Cordesman (2008), p. 6.

⁶⁵ IDF committed at least 15,000 troops to attacks in Lebanon out of a force that rose to roughly 30,000.

Cordesman (2008), p. 3.

⁶⁶ Kober, p. 4; Cordesman (2006), p. 5; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), pp. 64-66.

enemy, including the use of the element of surprise. The audacious fighting capabilities of Hezbollah came as a surprise to the troops on the ground. This was the result of a failure of the Israeli Military intelligence community – it had not distributed the ground forces with timely and accurate intelligence prior to engaging Hezbollah. Military Intelligence had claimed the information was too highly classified.⁶⁷ The Israeli troops on the ground faced a prepared enemy, including well-prepared defense lines and bunker systems, well-armed troops with missiles, rockets, mortars, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and advanced lighter arms like anti-tank weapons and surface-to-air missiles.⁶⁸ Fighting was fierce but ineffective, seen from the Israeli point of view, and the short range rockets launched by Hezbollah kept terrorizing the civilian population in Northern Israel. The IDF operations kept building up. On July 29 there was an increased effort by the Israeli's to create a security belt on the Northern Lebanese border. The ground troops took hold of dominating terrain and Special Forces hit targets in Bekaa Valley and Tyre. Yet regarding the overall effort, it had not much effect.⁶⁹

Due to the ineffectiveness of the IDF in the battlefield against Hezbollah's ground positions in Southern Lebanon, and particularly the IAF's inability in handling the continuous short-range rocket launcher threat to Northern Israel⁷⁰, it became evident that unless the territory from where the rockets were launched was captured, the threat would not disappear. This set the stage for the third phase of the war. Although cease fire negotiations were on-going, an operation was planned to capture the entire area south of the Litany River. The operation was approved by the Israeli government, because they thought it would give both military and political flexibility in the cease-fire negotiations.⁷¹ Israeli troops in the area nearly tripled, and on August 11, the operation began. It was never to accomplish its objectives, because the cease-fire took effect on August 13.⁷²

2.4 Characteristic of the Second Lebanon War and Hezbollah

Since the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000 up to the Second Lebanon War in July-August 2006, Hezbollah had developed dramatically from a terrorist militia to a formidable adversary. It had developed its military capabilities and thinking enormously. This had been done with the support of Iran and Syria. Hezbollah had recognized the advantage the difficult terrain in Southern Lebanon gave to the defender, it had learned to analyze the terrain from the

⁶⁷ Johnson, D. E. (2011a), pp. 66-67.

⁶⁸ Cordesman (2006), p. 13; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 68.

⁶⁹ Kober, pp. 5-6; Johnson D.E. (2011a), p. 91.

⁷⁰ Hezbollah fired some 3,950 rockets to Israel during the war; more than 100 a day, and nearly 250 on the last day. Cordesman (2008), p. 3.

⁷¹ Winograd Commission Final Report, points 29-31; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 71.

⁷² Kober, p. 5; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 72-73.

perspective of the armored offender, namely Israel, and began preparing the battle field accordingly⁷³. A sophisticated and well equipped bunker system with trenches, tunnels and fighting positions was built in Southern Lebanon, both in villages and in the “nature reserves”.⁷⁴ Some of these bunkers were 20-30 meters underground and equipped with concealed rocket firing positions. Hilltop villages were actually Hezbollah “fortresses” offering clear fields of fire, cover and concealment.⁷⁵

Another demonstration of developed military thinking of Hezbollah was the conclusion of its leadership to focus on fighter training on unconventional means, organizing small fighting units in a cellular manner, and equipping them with weapons normally associated with nation states. These small units were to fight with guerrilla warfare tactics (e.g. ambushes, attack and withdraw) – typical elements of hybrid warfare. Nicholas Blanford describes well Hezbollah’s cellular organization and capabilities in southern Lebanon in his article in Jane’s Intelligence Review:

The IR [Islamic Resistance, Hezbollah’s military wing] splits south Lebanon into several sectors, each one consisting of between 12 and 15 villages. Each sector was subdivided into smaller components of two to three villages. All sectors remained in close contact with each other and the IR leadership in Beirut using sophisticated fibre-optic communications that resisted IDF jamming and interception measures. A Hizbullah official said that each sector had the power to act autonomously if communications were severed, although IR’s chain of command remained unbroken throughout the conflict. On the sub-sector level, fighters used Motorola walkie-talkies. Each fighter was issued a code number and communicated using an ad hoc code based on local and personal knowledge of each other that would be meaningless to an eavesdropper.

The IR forces on the ground in south Lebanon were split essentially into two wings. The first was the full-time military force of experienced, well-trained, highly disciplined and motivated guerrilla fighters, aged from their late twenties to late thirties. Numbering a few hundred, the full-timers were deployed in the network of bunkers and tunnels in south Lebanon as well as other locations. These fighters, equipped with military uniforms, were split into teams of 15 to 20

⁷³ Glenn, pp. 4-6.

⁷⁴ Most were equipped with electricity, phone lines, air conditioning, stores of food, water, weapons and ammunition, sleeping areas, a kitchen and a bathroom. See Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 45-46.

⁷⁵ Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 45-47.

and chiefly were responsible for artillery rockets, advanced anti-tank missiles and sniping. . . .

The second wing was the “village guard” units, many of them veteran guerrilla combatants from the 1990s when the IDF occupied south Lebanon. Although they share the same high degree of motivation and discipline as their full-time comrades, the village guards were an irregular force of part-time personnel. The guards remained in their villages after most civilians had fled north. In the event of an IDF ground invasion, the village guards would provide successive layers of defence consisting of fresh, well-armed fighters able to take advantage of their intimate knowledge of the local terrain to interdict and frustrate the IDF advance. The village guards, dressed in civilian clothing, were armed with AK-47 assault rifles, light machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and AT-3 Sagger anti-tank missiles.⁷⁶

One could say the command network of Hezbollah was well developed with fiber-optic communications and with the authority to act and fight autonomously if the communication lines were cut to their command. From the description Blanford gives one could almost argue that Hezbollah conducted compound warfare, the first wing, full time fighters being the “regular army”, and the second wing, the part-time “village guard”, being the guerrilla force. The first wearing the uniforms, symbols of a regular army and the latter wearing civilian clothes, typical of a guerrilla force. The locally based “village guard” members fought near their homes, they were very familiar with their area of operation and enjoyed wide popular support. They relied on stockpiled supplies and thus needed not to provide transportation or to protect lines of communication. This cellular organization applied to Hezbollah fighters from Southern Lebanon to the Beirut suburbs and the Bekaa Valley.⁷⁷

Typical of the Second Lebanon War was that as IDF engaged with Hezbollah, they often faced fighting in urban areas. Hezbollah had built its facilities and positions in villages and populated areas. It used civilian facilities and homes to store weapons and supplies, as well as for defensive and offensive positions. Rockets and mortars were deployed within villages and homes; with the Hezbollah soldiers rushing in and out to carry out firing missions.⁷⁸ Hezbollah used the people of Lebanon as *human shields* for their advantage, clearly against the rules

⁷⁶ Blanford, Nicholas: Deconstructing Hizbullah’s Surprise Military Prowess, *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, November 1, 2006, pp. 20–27.

⁷⁷ Johnson, D.E. (2011a), pp. 48–49.

⁷⁸ There were numerous videos taped by Israeli of Hezbollah setting up a system, firing and leaving in a time less than a minute. Cordesman (2008), p. 16.

of the international laws of war. As mentioned earlier by Blanford, Hezbollah “village guard” wore civilian clothes and thus made it difficult to distinguish between militants and civilians. Either way, IDF faced the challenge of accurate target intelligence and collateral damage – how to verify targets to be engaged with different types of weapons and how to avoid collateral damage? How much to limit the strikes and the use of force, if military operations were carried out of civilian facilities, or in the immediate vicinity of them? On the other hand, if the IDF Chief of Staff had publicly stated a threat of “setting Lebanon back 20 years”, it is tempting, if not evitable, for a non-state actor with terrorist status to use civilians as human shields.⁷⁹ Collateral damage would play for the benefit of Hezbollah in this case; it would be excellent media operations material to bring the population on their side.⁸⁰ It would make no difference from the Israeli point of view whether the collateral damage appearing on the media were actually civilian clothed “village guard” members or true civilians – either way, all that mattered in the end was how it appeared. In light of statistics, this could easily be done.⁸¹ The Hezbollah leadership used effectively its own TV- and broadcast capabilities to send out their own message to their supporters, to their foes and to international press.⁸²

Another characteristic of Hezbollah fighting during the conflict was their effective use of the advanced weapon systems it had acquired before the war, such as anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles, anti-ship missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles. The anti-tank weapons were used skillfully in terms of tactics – multiple weapons were fired at the same target indicating that the use of anti-tank weapons was concentrated in anticipated kill zones. Anti-tank weapons were effectively used against IDF ground troops seeking protection from buildings, and these kinds of weapons actually caused most of the casualties of IDF in the war.⁸³ The anti-aircraft missile capability, which existence was known by the Israeli intelligence community played an important role from the Hezbollah’s perspective, although it could only drop one IAF aircraft during the war.⁸⁴ Just the knowledge of short range air-defense missiles possessed by Hezbollah forced IAF to change mission profiles and to use extensively counter-

⁷⁹ *The Herald Sun*: Photos that damn Hezbollah, July 30, 2006, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/archive/old-news-pages/photos-that-damn-hezbollah/story-e6frf7r6-111112144002>, accessed 12.7.2013.

⁸⁰ Cordesman (2006), pp. 13-14.

⁸¹ Lebanon reported some 1,110 civilian dead, 3,700 civilians wounded and almost 1 million displaced persons at the peak of the fighting. It also made claims that the war cost some \$2.4-6.0 billion worth of damage, some \$398 million worth of damage to electric facilities and key infrastructure equipment, and over 150,000 residences destroyed. Cordesman (2008), p. 32.

⁸² Cordesman (2008), p. 8.

⁸³ IDF estimated that at least 500 anti-tank guided missiles were fired during the fighting (ATGM: AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, AT-5 Spandrel, TOW, Tophaan, AT-13 Metis, AT-14 Kornet; ATW: RPG-29/Vampire). Some 500 Merkava Main Battle Tanks were committed to battle; some 50 were hit, 21/22 were penetrated depending on the source, out of which 10 caused casualties. Cordesman (2008), pp. 43-46.

⁸⁴ The IAF flew some 15,500 sorties during the war, lost one aircraft due to hostile fire and four to accidents. Cordesman (2008), p. 36.

measures to avoid possible ambushes to IAF planes. A successful ambush could have provided Hezbollah with a propaganda victory.⁸⁵

In the first days of the war Hezbollah damaged INS Hanith with an anti-ship missile, a capability thought to be possessed only by national armies rather than by an organization with terrorist status. Israeli intelligence had given estimates of such weapons in the possession of Hezbollah as early as 2003, but the Israel Navy did not take the warning seriously, and as a result missile corvette INS Hanith operated without using active countermeasures and the ship was struck.⁸⁶

The unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) supplied by Iran⁸⁷ provided Hezbollah with another force multiplier. With a range of up to 450 kilometers and payload capability of 45 kg it could deliver its load practically anywhere in Israel with an accuracy of 10 m with the GPS guidance system. One penetrated Israeli air defense system and was shot down by IAF 15 km from Haifa. This demonstrated a new threat to Israel, since the UAVs could not be detected with the normal surveillance radars and had new repercussions unimaginable had the payload been chemical or biological weapons.⁸⁸

It is estimated that Hezbollah possessed approximately 15,000 short, medium and long range rockets prior to the 2006 war. Although the long and medium range rockets and missiles threat to Israel was dismissed by IAF during the first days of the war, Hezbollah demonstrated its capability to inflict damage and a continuous threat to the Northern Israel civilian population by the firing of short range rockets continuously during the entire war. The smaller rockets required smaller launchers; they were moved and hidden easily and were both quick to set up and fire – a weapon that was used very effectively.⁸⁹ Some of these rocket launchers (Katyushas) had been pre-positioned in the concrete shelters built before the Second Lebanon War and with a developed automatic remote controlled launching system required only few fighters to use them. With prepositioned stockpiles of rockets, Hezbollah was able to maintain an average launching rate of 90-150 a day throughout the war.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Israeli intelligence estimated Hezbollah to have a number of different types of man-portable surface-to-air missiles (SA-7 Strela/Grail, SA-14 Gremlin, SA-16 Gimlet, SA-18 Grouse) and perhaps a vehicle mounted, radar guided system (SA-8 Gecko) with a range of 10km. Cordesman (2008), p. 36. Also see Kober, p. 11.

⁸⁶ Cordesman (2008), pp. 37-38; Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 66; Blanford, Nicholas: *Warriors of God; Inside Hezbollah's Thirty-Year Struggle Against Israel*, Random House, New York, NY, USA, 2011, p. 338.

⁸⁷ Iranian ABABIL was called MIRSAD-1 by Hezbollah. Kober, p. 6.

⁸⁸ Cordesman (2008), pp. 16-18.

⁸⁹ Cordesman (2006), p. 5; Cordesman (2008), pp. 16-19.

⁹⁰ Johnson D. E. (2011a), pp. 51-52, 65.

Hezbollah had developed its intelligence capabilities as well, including signals intelligence (SIGINT), human intelligence (HUMINT) and image intelligence (IMINT) by using UAVs⁹¹. HUMINT and UAV's were used to target Israeli military installations. There were some reports of Iranian promoted electronic warfare capabilities of Hezbollah during the war, such as jamming and successful hacking of Israeli communications, which Israel has denied. Israeli soldiers captured sophisticated Iranian made "eavesdropping devices, computers, and modern communications equipment"⁹². It can be said that Hezbollah was well prepared to fight the war under the influence of Israeli electronic warfare; with earlier mentioned fiber-optics communications it could maintain its command network throughout the war. It even preserved "high level of security and encryption" in order to protect its own communications from Israeli SIGINT.⁹³

2.5 Summary

Looking at the outcome of the Second Lebanon War, one must admit that Hezbollah emerged as the one having better reached its set goals for the war than Israel. Israel could not restore credibility of deterrence, but the effect was rather the opposite. Kober points out serious weaknesses of IDF that were exposed: a late perception that it was war; adherence to post-heroic warfare under circumstances that rather required a different approach; the erosion of the IDF's fighting standards due to policing missions; artificial Revolution in Military Affairs –inspired concepts; the adoption of the notion of *controlling* instead of capturing territory; a centralized logistic system; poor generalship; a hesitant and inexperienced political leadership and IDF dominance in decisions on military matters.⁹⁴ All these problems could be discussed in some detail, but are out of the scope of this thesis. Lebanon was not forced to act as a credible state to end the Hezbollah's "state-with-in-state" status. Rather this war forced the Lebanese Government to ask the international community for support against the Israeli aggression towards Lebanon.⁹⁵

⁹¹ La Franchi, Peter: Iranian-made Ababil-T Hezbollah UAV shot down by Israeli fighter in Lebanon crisis, Flightglobal, 15 August, 2006, <http://www.flightglobal.com/news/articles/iranian-made-ababil-t-hezbollah-uav-shot-down-by-israeli-fighter-in-lebanon-crisis-208400/>, accessed 15.1.2013; Lambeth, Benjamin S.: *Air Operations in Israel's War Against Hezbollah: Learning from Lebanon and getting it Right in Gaza*, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA, USA, http://books.google.fi/books?id=Y6KCoXXU99sC&pg=PA131&lpg=PA131&dq=ababil+uav+hezbollah+2006&source=bl&ots=F5K4H8vqyz&sig=G_rp77Y0t335Vmpuc6WK3e5p2rE&hl=fi&sa=X&ei=DET1UIGyD4Xns wae4IGoCw&ved=0CE0Q6AEwBDgK#v=onepage&q=ababil%20uav%20hezbollah%202006&f=false, accessed 15.1.2013, p. 131.

⁹² Johnson D.E. (2011a), p. 53.

⁹³ Cordesman (2006), pp. 38-29; Cordesman (2008), p. 23; Kober, p. 20; Johnson D.E. (2011a), pp. 52-54.

⁹⁴ Kober, p. 9.

⁹⁵ Cordesman (2006), p. 16.

Looking at Hezbollah's strategic goals of the war:

- Survive and adapt to an Israeli-driven escalation
- Inflict maximum casualties in forward area
- Win limited war of attrition
- Demonstrate the ability to strike into Israel with short and long range weapons
- Dominate media battle
- Enhance post-war status in Lebanon and Islamic world
- Emerge with political leadership, most weapons and key cadres intact
- Prevent from being disarmed after the war⁹⁶

It can be said that Hezbollah was successful in almost all of them.

Hezbollah was unable to inflict real heavy casualties to IDF or Israel in general, but the damages caused were higher than expected, and as Israel has a democratic elected government, casualties are always a problem. The long range missile weapon systems were used in the beginning of the war, but were quickly taken out by the IAF. Yet the continuous use of short range rockets and the use of UAV have demonstrated adequately the Hezbollah striking capability beyond close range. As a result of the ceasefire it was not disarmed nor was Hezbollah incapacitated. It could continue to rebuild its lost capabilities, and continue to be an important part of Lebanese politics, and it has.

The reasons for Hezbollah's achievements are many. It can be said that Israel underestimated the new capabilities of Hezbollah, both politically and militarily, and at the same time overestimated its own capability to win the war by waging only an air campaign without the use of an extensive ground element.⁹⁷ Perhaps the biggest failure of Israel in the Second Lebanon War was that it escalated the retaliatory operation into a war before the Israeli government had decided whether to conduct a short and powerful blow on Hezbollah, or to bring about a significant change in Southern Lebanon with a large ground operation. In addition, the Israelis went to war without deciding on an exit strategy.⁹⁸

Not only did Hezbollah possess weapons usually associated with national armies, but it used them with considerable precision and skill. With modern standoff weapons and advanced guerrilla tactics included with the exclusion of internationally accepted rules of war, such as the use of civilians or civilian targets as shields for operative troops was something IDF was not prepared for. But as Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hezbollah said

⁹⁶ Cordesman (2008), p. 7.

⁹⁷ Cordesman (2008), p. 5; Johnson D.E. (2011a), p. 56, pp. 60-61.

*“...we are not a regular army. We will not fight like a regular army.”*⁹⁹ They did not, and it worked against Israel, a foe thinking and fighting according to the Western standards. The command system of Hezbollah was decentralized and responsibilities were distributed to smaller cells, thus giving the organization flexibility and strength to carry on fighting despite the fact that any of these independent cells were incapacitated. During the years before the war, Hezbollah had plenty of time to build its defensive positions in Southern Lebanon according to their estimates of possible battle spaces, and prepare for the eventually inevitable armed conflict, if not war, against Israel. With the decentralized command system going hand in hand with a decentralized logistics system, the small cells had well planned resources available for them and gave them logistical independence from the upper echelons, which is often not the case with national armies.

The support of Iran and Syria to Hezbollah was crucial to Hezbollah before and during the war. Since Israel's 2000 withdrawal from Lebanon, both countries supported and supplied the Hezbollah military build-up extensively bringing weapons and military expertise to Lebanon. During the war the support continued, and the support has continued after war as well. Israeli intelligence estimated that during the war Iranian advisors were closely working with Hezbollah. It is estimated that the Iranian advisors helped Hezbollah create a command center for targeting and missile fire control thus increasing the Hezbollah capabilities.¹⁰⁰ Without the support from Iran and Syria, Hezbollah could not have built its military capabilities prior to the war, nor could it have maintained its forces during the war either. This demonstrates the importance and effectiveness of external support, a state sponsor, to an organization like Hezbollah.

The Second Lebanon War demonstrates the capability of a non-state actor like Hezbollah to wage war successfully against an army like the IDF, study and deconstruct the vulnerabilities of Western style military and devise appropriate countermeasures.¹⁰¹ To do this, it mixed elements of war to a cocktail of a hybrid war, and used these elements as force multipliers to its advantage. A successful cocktail of hybrid war served by Hezbollah included advanced weapons, well trained troops in irregular warfare, use of the media to distribute self-profitable information, disregard of the lives of own and civilian casualties, the inclusion of a strong religious background and last, but not least, the knowledge of the opponent with the inclusion of political and military capabilities and restrictions, and especially the opponent's moral limita-

⁹⁸ Winograd Commission Final Report, points 13-15.

⁹⁹ Nasrallah on war in Cordesman (2008), p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ Cordesman (2006), p. 20.

¹⁰¹ Hoffman (2009a), p. 37.

tions. Just the kind of “Hybrid War” Hoffman describes as a “*blend of lethality of state conflict with the fanatical and protracted fervor of irregular warfare.*”¹⁰² The future adversaries will have organizations of a hybrid kind, and the means by which to reach their respective objectives; they “*will exploit access to modern military capabilities... and promote protracted insurgencies that employ ambushes, improvised explosive devices, and coercive assassinations.*”¹⁰³ The Second Lebanon War serves as a good example, how to fight and to be successful against a western military driven force, its lessons have been learned and studied by other organizations like Hezbollah. These are the types of conflicts and perhaps the types of hybrid adversaries the western militaries will be faced with in the future.

¹⁰² Hoffman (2007), p. 28.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 28.

3 THE MODIFIED MODEL OF IDENTIFYING A HYBRID ADVERSARY

In this chapter the challenges related to the development of the concept of both hybrid threat and *hybrid adversary* will be discussed first prior to the introduction of the model. This discussion is important background information for the thought process behind the model of identifying emerging *hybrid adversaries* created by MAJ Christopher O. Bowers of the US ARMY and further developed by the author into the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*.

3.1 Background

The US Armed Forces faces situation where they prepare to carry out missions in the full spectrum of military operations. This explains the interest in the Israeli experiences in the Second Lebanon War. It can be argued that Hezbollah and the 2006 Second Lebanon War have already had a significant impact on the current and future US military thinking, doctrine, and capabilities, since it became the basis for General James Mattis, USJFCOM Commander to mandate “*Effective immediately, USJFCOM will no longer use, sponsor, or export the terms and concepts related to EBO [effects-based operations], ONA [operational net assessment], and SoSA [system of systems analysis] in our training, doctrine development, and support of JPME.*”¹⁰⁴ It can also be said that from the American perspective Hezbollah and Hamas provide insights into the challenges in the future warfare that the United States could face in the next 20 years.¹⁰⁵

Organizations in the “middle”, between irregular and state adversary, like Hezbollah, can create conditions that are similar to High Intensity Conflicts (HIC) normally expected to be faced in conflicts with states against states. Fighting successfully against a foe in the “middle”, would require “*the forces with HIC skills to be used in lower scale (brigades) than in state-on-state conflict*” and “*requires sophisticated combined-arms fire and maneuver*”.¹⁰⁶ Dr. Johnson discusses that the American military is becoming bipolar, highly capable in irregular and state warfare, and little in the middle. The focus of the U.S. military is shifting away from active “world police” operations on behalf of its allies, such as long lasting campaigns in Afghanistan or Iraq, to handing the responsibility to those nations with interests involved in the

¹⁰⁴ Mattis, James N.: “USJFCOM Commander’s Guidance for Effects-Based Operations,” *Parameters*, Autumn 2008), p. 23.

¹⁰⁵ Johnson, David E.: Minding the Middle: Insights from Hezbollah and Hamas for Future Warfare, *Strategic Insights*, October 2011c, Vol 10, Special Issue, pp. 124-125; Blanford (2011), pp. 409-410.

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, D. E. (2011a), p. 145.

conflict.¹⁰⁷ But these types of conflicts may be confronted by the US military in the future, and thus there is a need to study and learn more of them.¹⁰⁸

Since the emergence of the terms hybrid warfare and hybrid threat, the discussion over the definitions of each term have been a numerous. Multiple authors, scholars and soldiers have tried to come up with one that would work well, but all have had some deficiencies. After the Second Lebanon War the discussion over the definitions even multiplied. In 2009, precision was reintroduced by Hoffman and he defined hybrid threat as “*any adversary that simultaneously and adaptively employs a fused mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism and criminal behavior in the battle space to obtain their political objectives.*”¹⁰⁹ The definition became of importance, because it was realized that hybrid threat as defined could or it should actually influence the decisions about the military capabilities needed to counter them. However, it was recognized that the vagueness of the terms “hybrid enemy”, “hybrid warfare” and “hybrid war” – meaning that due to the lack of official and accepted definition – they could be defined differently by any one, and this could lead to the development of the US Armed Forces based on false definition, which in turn, could blur the thinking of the security environment the US might face in the future.¹¹⁰

In *Hard Fighting: Israel in Lebanon and Gaza*, Dr. Johnson recognizes the importance of a clear assessment of the adversary’s capabilities while planning for the military means to deal with it. Based on Israeli experiences, he then divides opponents into three categories according to their military capabilities and comes with a conclusion that each level of opponent requires different demands on the military forces to face them. The demands for military forces required to face these opponents are out of the scope of this thesis, but the categories are not. He comes up with a “*Capabilities-Based Model for Framing Current and Future Challenges*”. In this model, he discusses adversaries, not threats, and divides them into three levels, namely non-state irregular, state-sponsored hybrid and state adversaries. He discusses the typical features and military capabilities of each level adversary and then displays the different measures to be taken into account by the opposing military force to be successful against the level of adversary in question. He also gives examples of organizations on each level based on the conflicts of the last 30 years.¹¹¹ I will incorporate his descriptions of the features and

¹⁰⁷ Friedman, George: Avoiding the Wars That Never End, Stratfor, Global Intelligence, January 15, 2013, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/avoiding-wars-never-end>, accessed 21.1.2013.

¹⁰⁸ Johnson, D.E. (2011c), p. 135.

¹⁰⁹ Hoffman, Frank G.: Hybrid vs. compound war, The Janus choice: Defining today’s multifaceted conflict, *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2009b, <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2009/10/4198658>, accessed 1.10.2010.

¹¹⁰ Johnson, D.E. (2011a), p. 146-147.

¹¹¹ See Johnston, D.E. (2011a), p. 171 for full table with features and examples of each level adversary.

military capabilities of state-sponsored *hybrid adversary* to the model of identifying a *hybrid adversary* later in this chapter, and thus will not discuss them any further at this time.¹¹²

Prior to the official US Armed Forces definition of a hybrid threat in FM 3-0: Operations Change 1, in 2011, most of the literature dealing with the issue concentrated on “what” and “who” are the hybrid threats. None have dealt with really how to identify an organization developing into one, or what circumstances it would require for an organization to develop into one.¹¹³ Dr. Johnson touches the last question in his book mentioned in previous paragraph and provides valuable information regarding that issue. Even if we look at the current definition in FM 3-0: Operations, it does leave us a bit dissatisfied.

*“A hybrid threat is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects. Hybrid threats combine regular forces governed by international law, military tradition, and custom with unregulated irregular forces that act with no restrictions on violence or their targets. These forces could include militias, terrorists, guerillas, and criminals. Such forces combine their abilities to use and transition between regular and irregular tactics and weapons. These abilities enable hybrid threats to capitalize on perceived vulnerabilities making them particularly effective.”*¹¹⁴

The definition above gives the reader answers to questions “what” and “who” – “What” being “...diverse and dynamic combination... governed by international law... act with no restrictions on violence or their targets... combine their abilities... regular and irregular tactics and weapons...” and “who” being “...regular forces, terrorists, criminal elements or a combination these forces...”. Practically the above definition covers almost everything that a military force, in this case the US Armed Forces, might face in any given conflict involving one or more militant groups or a *hybrid adversary* for that matter, taking advantage of modern means and technology available. As the definition is conclusive it has the problem of being difficult to get a hold of and take to practical use. But the same problem lies with a number of studies related to the issue, as mentioned before. The definitions of hybrid warfare and hybrid threat or *hybrid adversary* are too vague and theoretical. To argue that an organization that uses multiple forms of warfare, and means of terrorism, criminality, guerrilla tactics and cyber-attacks to achieve its goals is hybrid, is too vague, because it can be expected that any

¹¹² Johnson, D.E. (2011a), p. 147-148.

¹¹³ Bowers, p. 39.

¹¹⁴ FM 3-0: Operations, Ch 1, p. 1-5.

up to date organization will use any capabilities available to it to achieve its goals. It is important to understand, as Bowers states in his article, “*one needs to be cautious in simply defining a hybrid adversary as any that engages in multiple forms of warfare, because this can include just about any organization from criminal gangs like MS-13 to German Wehrmacht. If everybody is hybrid, then nobody is.*”¹¹⁵

As discussed earlier, the need to define a hybrid threat, or rather, a *hybrid adversary*¹¹⁶ is important, because it could have implications on the development of the concepts of operation of armed forces in the middle range warfare. To face a *hybrid adversary* in the battle field, to be victorious, one has to have the capabilities to defeat it. There are not many groups in the world today with advanced military capabilities and organizational maturity that could be categorized as being a true *hybrid adversary*, because it is a state not easily achieved, which is why it would be useful to be able to detect one. In particular, for a global power like the United States, with global political, economic and military interests, it would be useful to know the circumstances in which an organization develops into a hybrid kind and to be able to detect these possible emerging hybrid organizations in advance in order to assist or to prevent them from developing into an ally or adversary of a hybrid kind.

If you combine together the thoughts of MAJ Bowers and Dr. Johnson, you could come up with the following description of a *hybrid adversary*:

A fully developed hybrid adversary will be able to transition between irregular or guerilla war, and highly conventional warfare in company- or larger-sized formations at will. It will be able to engage opposing military forces effectively at a distance, and force them to fight through an extended engagement area to get into the close fight. It possesses standoff weapons, such as anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM), man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS), rockets or anti-ship missiles, and it has both the training to use them effectively and the supply chain to maintain the capability. In addition, they will employ a wide range of other capabilities including cyber, social media, secure communication, organized and trans-nationally networked crime, and advanced technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). In the future, they may even utilize robots. Finally, to maintain and to develop its capabilities it either receives substantial external support from a

¹¹⁵ Bowers, p. 40.

¹¹⁶ Threat is a subjective concept depending from what perspective one looks at it.

*state sponsor or it has acquired its capabilities from an aftermath of a failing state.*¹¹⁷

Hybrid adversary does not only possess the kind of advanced weapons mentioned above, but it also has the capability to use them effectively. It falls between an insurgent group and a modern state military and it usually maintains a somewhat loose and cellular structure, but “at will” it can operate in company- or larger size formations. It develops over time in a specific and predictable ways. This evolution was studied by Peter Underwood in his work “Pirates, Vikings, and Teutonic Knights”. He finds that armed groups can develop from primitive bands with greed as motivation to mature organizations driven by fanatical ideology. There are groups in the middle, which are in transition, still motivated by greed. Eventually at some point in time these groups will realize that to be able to better implement their ideals or just to get a bigger stake in the economic, political or social order, they need more political and military power, and thus they start seeking it. Underwood calls this “maturity” and notes that if the group is to move beyond a “*routine criminal annoyance or fanatical fringe element*,” support, open or tacit, from an existing government is needed.¹¹⁸

From the discussion above, we can conclude that there are at least three necessary factors for the development of a *hybrid adversary* – capability, maturity and a state sponsor. Two of these were introduced as core variables in the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*, namely capability and maturity. State sponsor is included in the maturity core variable. The third core variable in the model is the terrain. Next I will discuss the model in detail.

3.2 The Model

The purpose of the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* is to create a simple tool that can help to identify whether an organization is a hybrid kind or whether it could develop into one provided that right circumstances prevailed. This model examines the current knowledge and understanding of hybrid threats and their capabilities and then brings all this information together in one picture in the context of the three core variables mentioned before – capability, maturity and complex terrain. All these variables are divided into sub-variables. Each of these sub-variables is defined and thus an organization can be measured according to these definitions. The core variables and sub-variables are placed on a dartboard like picture. When an organization is being measured according to the model, the closer to the center of the

¹¹⁷ Bowers, p. 40; Johnson, D.E. (2011a), p. 154-157

¹¹⁸ Underwood, Peter: “Pirates, Vikings, and Teutonic knights” in Norwitz, Jeffrey H.: *Terrorists and Warlords: The History, Influence, and Future of Armed Groups Around The World*, Skyhorse, New York, NY, USA, 2009, p. 3-4.

dartboard it qualifies in different entities, namely the light red and red areas; the more it can be judged to have the potential to be or to develop into a *hybrid adversary*. Also we can see the entities it needs to develop that would enable it to become one.

The model MAJ Bowers introduced in his article “*Identifying Emerging Hybrid Adversaries*” is in essence pretty much the same as presented here (Figure 2, page 15), with the exception that his model is divided into smaller entities and made it more measurable. Another difference is that he used triangles to describe the core variables, and at the intersection of these triangles was the “sweet spot” where the *hybrid adversary* was at its truest and most effective – with “*maximum tactical, operational, and strategic effectiveness.*”¹¹⁹ His picture with overlapping triangles was descriptive, but with the lack of visible and clear both core and sub-variables it was difficult to measure the levels on them. Thus I decided to place these core and sub-variables on a dartboard type figure divided for each variable. I lost the “sweet spot”, but in return got two zones, lighter red and darker red zones that are easier to measure and more visual. In both models, there is an “out-of-bound” area, tips of the triangles and the bull’s eye in the dartboard. In this area, it can be said the organization loses its edge of being hybrid and it has gone beyond the range of being a *hybrid adversary*, and sunk perhaps in the bureaucracy and “going through the motions” type of a national army.

Any group measured on the model can move up and down the scale on each sub-variable, meaning that a position of a *hybrid adversary* can be attained and it can be lost. None of the definitions of the sub-variables are constant; rather they are constantly changing over time. With the model these changes can be seen and then the threat level as well as development of the organization being measured estimated.

In the next sub-chapters the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* is presented. While defining variable and sub-variable the definitions of both MAJ Bowers and the author are incorporated in. Since Hezbollah may be considered the best example of a *hybrid adversary* at this time, it is used as an example on each of the variables and sub-variables while explaining the model in the following sub-chapters.

3.2.1 Capability

As discussed earlier, capability is one of the core variables, and capabilities play an important role while determining a hybrid threat. Thus an organization considered to be a *hybrid adversary* needs to possess at least some capabilities usually associated with modern national mili-

¹¹⁹ Bowers, p. 39, 42; See Enclosure 9.2.

taries. In this model, for an organization to be credited of having a capability, it is expected to retain all three following entities:

- Weapon: A particular type of weapon or technology in substantial numbers (e.g. ATMG, MANPADS etc.)
- Training: Training to use them effectively.
- Sustainability: The capability to maintain sustainability.¹²⁰

Based on this for a group to have a capability it needs to have substantial numbers of a particular weapon (e.g. MANPADS); in order to use them effectively, they must have received training for that particular weapon and tactics in its use; they must have figured out how to re-supply the expended MANPADS to maintain the capability. If one of these factors does not materialize, then the groups MANPADS are more of an “event” rather than a capability.¹²¹

3.2.1.1 Weapon

The three sub-variables introduced can be split into smaller entities within each sub-variable. MAJ Bowers split “weapon” in the following manner moving from the lower end of the spectrum to the center of the dartboard:

- Small arms
- Ineffective indirect fire (IDF) and/or improvised explosive devices (IEDs)
- Explosively formed penetrators (EFPs)
- Effective IDF (rockets, mortars)
- ATGMs and/or MANPADS
- Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)¹²²

Any group of bandits can get a hold of small arms and use them effectively to their advantage, but to have rockets, or mortars or ATGMs is far more difficult and it can be expected that a group with such weapons is fairly developed in many ways. If we look at Hezbollah, we can say that based on the Second Lebanon War it had all but WMDs, which are considered to be only in the arsenal of national militaries due to the extensive costs and amount of rare and specialized expertise needed to develop and maintain that capability.¹²³

¹²⁰ Bowers, p. 41.

¹²¹ Bowers, p. 41; Johnson (2011a), p. 156.

¹²² Bowers, p. 42.

¹²³ See chapter 2, pp. 31-33; Bowers, p. 42.

3.2.1.2 Training

To make training measurable, I split it from the lower end on as follows:

- No training at all.
- Occasional training (received time to time, from state sponsor, or other organization co-operated with referring to some particular issue or exchange of expertise e.g. weapon, building a suicide bomb belt).
- Continuous training (aimed to maintain and improve the level of current capabilities).
- A comprehensive training program (aimed to maintain current level and to increase the level and number of capabilities available, combining other capabilities together to get better results - combined).

Hezbollah can be concluded to have an extensive training program due to the results of the Second Lebanon War. For example, it could fight very effectively; use its singular weapons in concert with other weapons (mortars, ATGMs, rockets, mines, IEDs etc.) in a manner that required tactical thinking. It could engage the IDF with its ATGMs and mortars from a distance up to 5 km. It had expertise to use SIGINT, HUMINT and even IMINT for targeting. These are the kind of elements that do not surface without conducting extensive training and time. Hezbollah had done that, with the help of its state sponsors, Iran and Syria. It had taken advantage of the time and support available from its sponsors to develop a comprehensive training program.¹²⁴

3.2.1.3 Sustainability

In order to maintain a capability one must be able to sustain it. It is not enough to have, let's say 50 ATGMs. They need to be distributed to the fighters using them, a resupply must be secured from some source to maintain the number of weapons after some or all are expended and in case they are not used immediately, they must be stockpiled in a manner that is required by a particular weapon for it to function accordingly after taken out of storage. This requires a logistical chain. Thus I identified three key elements of sustainability:

- Resupply (availability to the organization)
- Storage
- Distribution (to the fighters).

In order to make these three elements measurable, I chose the criteria to move from the lower end of the measured sub-variable to the center in the following manner:

¹²⁴ See Chapter 2, p. 31-33; Johnson, D.E. (2011c), p. 154; Glenn (2012), p. 7.

- One timer (for one reason or another, an organization gets a hold of particular weapon; single case, no continuation).
- Ad hoc (weapons are dealt with as they appear to the hands of the organization with the expectation of something more to come; planning of other key elements, but re-supply).
- Limited (all key elements planned to some extent; expectation of more to come).
- Partial (all key elements are planned; but not to full extent) and
- Full sustainability (all key elements are planned to full extent).

Prior to the Second Lebanon War, Hezbollah was estimated to have some 15,000 rockets of different kind and hundreds of ATGMs. All these were accumulated over the years after the Israeli withdrawal in year 2000. They were stored and distributed to the fighters during the preparations of the positions to face the IDF prior to the war. Most of these rockets and ATGMs were supplied to Hezbollah by its state sponsors, Iran and Syria.¹²⁵ The sheer numbers were so high, and the storage and distribution had been taken care of that during the conflict, as short as it was, resupply was not an issue to diminish either capability. The fact that Hezbollah could maintain a substantial daily firing rate of 90-150 rockets to Northern Israel throughout the war and was able to use ATGMs in large quantities at a time suggest that large numbers were pre-delivered to the firing units.¹²⁶ After the conflict Hezbollah has had the possibility to replenish its supply of these weapons, and other weapons as well. Thus we can conclude that with Hezbollah full sustainability was reached.¹²⁷

The kind of capabilities (weapon, training, sustainment) discussed above can be acquired by organizations from state sponsors and perhaps failing states. A failing state's military could easily possess capabilities associated with national armies and as a result of the failure of its nation, it could either offer its services and capabilities to other organizations or form an organization of its own with hybrid qualities and begin to support its own agenda. Weapons of mass destruction could end up in the hands of a hybrid organization in the scenario of a state collapse. As mentioned earlier, WMDs are unlikely to become a capability among hybrid adversaries due to the specialized skills needed and huge costs to sustain it. Also the response of the other world nuclear powers would be unpredictable and it could work to the disadvantage of the hybrid organization.¹²⁸

For the acquisition of modern military capabilities (including training and support), it can be said that for an organization of hybrid nature, the best way to acquire these capabilities is from

¹²⁵ Blanford, p. 409.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 395.

¹²⁷ See Chapter 2, p. 34.

a state sponsor. It is not an issue of money – modern military capabilities are not sold to the highest bidder.¹²⁹ It must be noted too that a state sponsor is not likely to support its proxy unless it feels the proxy is generating enough of desired results. Namely, the proxy needs to operate for the benefit of its supporter, assisting to meet its strategic ends. State sponsor is not going to hand out state of the art military equipment and support to its proxy unless that pre-condition is satisfied. In the case of Hezbollah, it can be said that it is a state proxy supported strongly by Iran. Iran has provided it with capabilities associated with a hybrid threat.¹³⁰ Bowers brings up another Iranian supported Shiite extremists affiliated with Jaysh al-Mahdi in Iraq that never received such level of support as Hezbollah did as far as capabilities were concerned. The support was left at the level of explosively formed penetrators (EFPs), some training and technical support.¹³¹ There is a huge difference in the level of support between these two organizations, and to explain that one must estimate the differences of these organizations and their abilities to use these capabilities. If a proxy is provided with a capability, how much effort would it take from the state sponsor to have that capability effectively used and how would that work for the benefit of the sponsor? This promotes the conception of the importance of the state sponsor interests being met, when the potential of some organization to receive substantial support from a state sponsor is examined. *“No state wants to invest resources in a proxy organization that cannot or will not predictably assist in achieving its strategic ends.”*¹³²

Looking at Hezbollah again from the Iranian perspective, it serves as the only true success of Iranian exported Islamic revolution. It allows Iran to show influence in the Middle East region thus diminishing the historic tensions of Sunni Arabs and Shia Persians and directly influence a conflict with Israel – a Jewish state. Most important, Hezbollah’s military capabilities serve as a component of deterrence against a possible Western attack (including Israel) to the Iranian nuclear facilities. Hezbollah and Southern Lebanon can be considered an Iranian established bridgehead against Israel and thus increase its retaliatory options in case of an attack against it.¹³³ From this we can conclude that for Iran, supporting Hezbollah is a strategic investment. To make sure this investment is on track, Iranian forces conduct surprise inspections to assess Hezbollah’s readiness.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ Bowers, p. 41-42.

¹²⁹ Johnson, D.E. (2011c), pp. 156-157.

¹³⁰ Blanford, p. 409-410; Bowers, p. 43.

¹³¹ Bowers, p. 43.

¹³² Ibid, p. 43.

¹³³ Blanford, p. 482-483.

¹³⁴ Glenn (2012), p. 7.

3.2.2 Maturity

As Underwood pointed out that as armed groups mature they tend to start moving on the scale of maturity and focus less on short-term profit seeking, and more on attaining political power and military capability to promote their ideals. Group maturity is an important factor in becoming a hybrid actor. It is one of the core variables in this model and it can be divided into the following sub-variables:

- Strategy: Extent to which a group is goal-oriented with an effective strategy
- Degree of organization and cohesion
- Responsiveness to internal leadership and foreign state sponsors
- Depth of leadership¹³⁵

MAJ Bowers had included population support to this core variable, but I moved it to the third core variable, complex terrain, because there is already a sub-variable called human terrain and due to that, all human aspects are in the same location.

3.2.2.1 Strategy

Strategy is divided into smaller parts based on the extent of a group's goal-orientation, and they are:

- Settling old scores (e.g. family feuds; vengeance)
- Making money (e.g. piracy, smuggling, providing security)
- Ideology (or religion)
- Provision and implementation of Doctrine (an established procedure how to do things to achieve desired results)
- Provision and implementation of Strategy (a general, undetailed plan of actions to achieve a complex end state including a long period of time)

If we look at a potential *hybrid adversary*, it starts to move to the potential range from ideology on. Ideology plays an important role in the development of organizational maturity. As Bowers discusses that extreme ideologies may hinder the maturing process by being impractical due to the ideological restrictions. Combined with uncontrollability, this on the other hand, discourages state sponsors on investing in a particular group. According to Bowers, re-

¹³⁵ Bowers, p. 43.

ligious organizations are “*normally not sufficiently responsive to state sponsor’s strategic ends*” and with extreme ideologies run the risk of losing popular support as well.¹³⁶

With Hezbollah it can be said the ideology or religion is well presented. Strategy could be said to have been presented as early as June 1985, when it publicly manifested “Open Letter” in which it articulated its political goals and ideology, and listed a number of objectives to be achieved over time (it was updated on December 2009).¹³⁷ The manner in which Hezbollah had organized its defenses in Southern Lebanon during the Second Lebanon War refers to the idea of them having some sort of a doctrine of how to carry out a fight with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).

3.2.2.2 Degree of organization and cohesion

The degree of organization and cohesion develops from the outer perimeter towards the center in the following manner (in the parenthesis I have included the unit size up to which it is likely to operate, the number of men is an approximation):

- Street gangs (team – 3 men)
- Militias, organized crime (squad – 7 men)
- Paramilitary organizations (platoon – 30 men)
- Insurgents, rebels (company – 100 men)
- Middle (Uniforms, doctrine, training - hybrid) (battalion 600 men)
- National militaries (brigade - 4000 men, and larger)

As an organization develops, so does its capability to operate in larger formations. The smaller units within the larger unit operate in concert with each other, making the larger unit more capable than the sum of the capabilities of its sub-units. Once these types of organizations mentioned are capable of operating in unit sizes of a company or larger up to a battalion, at will, they start falling into the category of a *hybrid adversary*. This is due to the fact that they have discipline, cohesion, good command and control (C2) capabilities, and they understand how to avoid enemy strengths.¹³⁸

These hybrid adversaries in the “middle” may have uniforms, training and a doctrine to distinguish them from the insurgents or rebels. Cohesion is an important factor that brings the organization together and may attract state sponsor, and thus perhaps creating a possibility for

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 44.

¹³⁷ Blanford, p. 71-72, 479-480.

¹³⁸ Bowers, p. 43; Johnson, D.E. (2011c), p. 154-155.

an organization to ascend to the next level. As Dr. Johnson puts it “*an insurgency with deep political roots and unified ideology, for example, might be more likely to pose a hybrid threat than might a warlord’s militia.*”¹³⁹

Looking at Hezbollah, we can again say that it falls within that middle range of *hybrid adversary*. Hezbollah is not an insurgent group, rather a state-within-state. Its cadre fighters wore uniforms; it had training programs, and doctrine to fight. The manner, in which it had divided Southern Lebanon into sectors each consisting of 12-15 villages and the autonomy to carry on the fight each village had, provided that the communications were cut, implies a cellular nature. We could even argue Hezbollah used *auftragstaktik*, or “mission-type tactics”, which suggests the subordinates were well educated of the intents of the higher echelon and thus infers to the high level of Hezbollah’s tactical thinking. From this we can conclude that Hezbollah had in this entity the qualities of a *hybrid adversary*.

3.2.2.3 Responsiveness to internal leadership and foreign state sponsors

This is a key sub-variable, when discussing the effectiveness of an organization. Responsiveness to both internal leadership and foreign state sponsor plays an important role in gaining a sponsor. As discussed earlier, a state sponsor has no interest in providing extensive support to an organization that is not responsive to its demands. It may give it limited support, but state of the art modern military capabilities, needed to enter the zone of *hybrid adversary*, are not on that list. If the responsiveness to internal leadership is poor, the organization probably lacks cohesion and discipline, and it is thus not capable of operating in larger size units, thus missing the level of a *hybrid adversary*. I have split the responsiveness to internal leadership and external state sponsor in the following manner:

- No sponsor
- Uncontrollable (renegade factions)
- Semi-responsive (rogue elements)
- Responsive

The hybrid range in this sub-variable goes between semi-responsive and responsive. As mentioned earlier by Underwood and Dr. Johnson, state sponsorship is a prerequisite for an organization to develop into a true *hybrid adversary*.¹⁴⁰ In order to gain and to maintain a state sponsor, an organization must demonstrate adequate level of responsiveness to the demands of a possible sponsor from the sponsor’s perspective, thus making itself an attractive investment

¹³⁹ Johnson, D.E. (2011c), p. 155.

for the sponsor. This means that it does not necessarily have to comply with everything the sponsor demands, but rather enough to offset the cost-benefit estimate of the sponsor.

Organizations developing over time tend to have at one time or another, renegade factions or rogue elements not responsive to the internal leadership. This can be a problematic to the development of the organization, and thus in order to mature to the next level, an organization must eventually subdue the elements within the organization not acting towards the unified end state. This sub-variable develops together with the depth of leadership introduced next.

With Hezbollah, we can concur that it has been responsive over Iran's long term goals and provides Iran with additional value thus making it a worthwhile investment to maintain.¹⁴¹

3.2.2.4 Depth of leadership

Depth of leadership implies there are fewer points of failure within the organization as far as leadership is concerned. Key leaders and even entire units can be killed and captured with relatively minimal loss of overall capability.¹⁴² I split the depth of leadership into following elements:

- Single leader: Organization is led by single leader and no command structure.
- Multiple leaders: Multiple leaders, but rivalry among the leaders; command structure is primitive.
- Limited command structure: There is some kind of a command structure; replacements planned to some degree.
- Command structure: Clear command structure throughout the organization; replacements planned top-down.

Hezbollah depth of leadership can be categorized in the developed end of the spectrum thus bringing it to the range of *hybrid adversary*.

It is important to understand that "maturity" does not equal "time" in this model. MAJ Bowers brings forward an interesting idea that in order to fully mature, a *hybrid adversary* would have to survive the very conflict that gave birth to it. This time prior to the next conflict would be critical breathing space during which it could "*deepen its leadership, strengthen its organization, purge rogue elements and train its members*". He also marks that this period will most likely involve "*low-level irregular warfare, terrorism or similar activities*". Furthermore it is a relief from the active operations of open warfare, yet serving as time to main-

¹⁴⁰ Underwood, p. 3-4; Johnson, D.E. (2011c), p. 154-157.

¹⁴¹ See Chapter 3, p. 46.

¹⁴² Bowers, p. 43.

tain group's ideology and political relevance in its own area of influence.¹⁴³ All this can be applied to the development of Hezbollah from the year 2000 till 2006 – the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Southern Lebanon in 2000 to the Second Lebanon War of 2006.

3.2.3 Complex Terrain

Terrain is the third core variable in the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*. All organizations are a product of their environment, and potential hybrid adversaries are no exception. They are linked to the terrain in which they exist and operate. MAJ Bowers argues that due to the complexity of the terrain, it may be “*a critical factor in determining whether a true hybrid adversary can exist*”.¹⁴⁴ In this model, “terrain” is divided into the following sub-variables:

- Geographical Terrain
- Human Terrain
- Cyberspace

The more complex the terrain, the less a modern state military can take advantage of its strengths, namely size, material and technology and more it has to be taken into consideration in every level of military operations, from the boots on the ground to the staff planners. Thus it can be said complex terrain is inherently a critical factor in the confrontation of a *hybrid adversary* and a modern state military.

3.2.3.1 Geographical Terrain

Geography plays an important part of any military operation. It can have decisive effects on the outcome of a battle if not taken into account. This is a known factor for any soldier regardless of the level of operation, and is a proven point throughout the course of history. In this model, “geography” is divided in manner that illustrates the capability of a western military to use its advantages diminishing as moving from the outside of the dartboard to the center. These geographical areas are

- High desert (an ideal battleground for mechanized military)
- Flat farmland
- Hills, villages
- Forests, hills, mountains, cities

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 44.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 44-45.

- Mega cities¹⁴⁵

As the operational area for an organization being examined falls into the category of hills, villages, forests, mountains and even cities, then according to this model we are falling into the range of a *hybrid adversary*. In these kinds of environments, the western militaries are falling out of their “comfort zones”, meaning the way their militaries were designed to operate at their full effectiveness does not meet the environmental demands. Armored forces are restricted to roads, line of sights are shorter, geographical obstructions may hinder communications, recognition of friendly forces get more difficult, risk of collateral damage increases, more ground forces are needed to hold areas etc. As you move towards the center of the dartboard in this model, the more advantageous the geographical aspects turn for a defender.

With Hezbollah, we can say that the geographical aspect falls into the category of *hybrid adversary*. We can also say that Hezbollah certainly had taken advantage of the geographical terrain and preparations to even improve the geographical aspect of the terrain for its advantage to meet the IDF in Southern Lebanon during the Second Lebanon War.¹⁴⁶

3.2.3.2 Human Terrain

In this model, human terrain is divided into two categories:

- Group Dynamics: Single dominant cultural group, multiple rival cultural groups, inter-group conflict, urban sprawl, ethnic civil war.¹⁴⁷
- Support of Population: No support, minority support, majority support, full support.

The human terrain can be seen to increase in complexity as you move from a single dominant cultural group to intergroup conflicts, urban sprawl and ethnic civil wars with multiple differently motivated groups fighting for whatever their cause from sheer profit to political power. A *hybrid adversary* will most likely be motivated by religion, ideology, and race, ethnic or other similar cohesive background, like a criminal organization (a drug cartel). This kind of common background gives the organization the motivation to enter a conflict to achieve its goal of correcting something for the advantage of their group, whether it is a social “wrong” or to gain better market share. Correcting a social “wrong” can provide the group with the support of the local population and thus provide it with time to time needed sanctuary and a

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 42, 45.

¹⁴⁶ Glenn (2012), pp. 4-5.

¹⁴⁷ Bowers, p.42, 45.

recruiting base. This can be seen in insurgent groups. They have close connections to the local populace, and are often supported by them as well.¹⁴⁸

An urban sprawl or an ethnic civil war might fall beyond the range of a *hybrid adversary*, because of the complexity; it just might require too much effort from a group to develop into or to maintain itself as a *hybrid adversary* in that kind of an environment.

Differently from MAJ Bowers' original model, I also added the support of the population to this section, because in my opinion it fits here better keeping the human factors in the same sub-variable. It also adds another important factor in the estimation of the human terrain from the perspective of the *hybrid adversary* examined depending whether it has popular support or not. For a group to develop into a *hybrid adversary*, it will not be of its disadvantage to have the substantial support of the population within that area of its influence. Thus, for the sake of this model, to be hybrid, a group is assumed to have the support of the majority of the population.

If we look at Hezbollah, it was born in a time of multiple groups and it survived the Lebanon War (1982-1985) comparable to an intergroup conflict/ethnic civil war, and it is now a single dominant cultural group in Southern Lebanon. It can be said it holds at least the support of the majority of the people in the in Southern Lebanon. Hence it can be said that Hezbollah falls partially in the range of *hybrid adversary* in this entity. However, with Hezbollah, it has to be taken into account that it has received substantial support over the years from not just on external supporters, but two, Iran and Syria, as a result of which it is not entirely depended on the support of the local population.

3.2.3.3 Cyberspace

Ongoing area of active operations in these days in expanding measure is the cyberspace. It is an area, the use of which can give the same leverage to an organization as does the geographical terrain and human terrain.¹⁴⁹ According to United States Army's *Cyberspace Operations Concept Capability Plan 2016-2028* cyberspace is defined as follows:

"A global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures, including the Internet,

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 45-46.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 45.

telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers."¹⁵⁰

Cyberspace is an area with infinite numbers of possibilities to explore and to exploit the enemy's vulnerabilities. Especially the western societies (and militaries) have become very dependent on the cyberspace in running the daily routines in the society (namely banking services, distribution of electricity and water, logistic chains from the producer to warehouse to the retailer to the consumer, telephone networks, air traffic control, running of factories or nuclear power plants etc.). Both the state militaries and the potential hybrid threats are developing capabilities in this area with variable success. Cyberspace is an area with assured activity on both sides in a conflict of today.

In this category, the hardware can be bought off-the-shelf, but the expertise in the software, system (internet or other) protocols, standards and services is harder to achieve. To achieve a high level of capability requires a continuous effort, and once achieved, it can be lost very quickly if the resources are cut or limited for some reason and the developed expert personnel cannot be retained. State actors have usually more resources than group actors, but with even smaller groups or even lone hackers can take advantage of this domain. Physical strength is not the issues in cyberspace, but rather logic and innovation are, and by taking advantage of these two factors a substantial advantage in this area can be achieved by anyone.¹⁵¹

It must be realized that the anonymity is typical of the attackers in Cyberspace. That is also the issue with a *hybrid adversary* in this domain. It can use cyberspace to its advantage and not necessarily be recognized to operate in cyberspace.¹⁵² The network operations may even be conducted by another group affiliated with or just sympathizing with the *hybrid adversary*, thus improving the hybrid's potential dramatically, as was the case with the hacker group "Anonymous Online" siding with Hamas in November 2012.¹⁵³

Additionally, one must understand that cyberspace may be used by the adversary for the benefit of the society as well, and not just to cause damage to a potential enemy. Nonetheless, in

¹⁵⁰ United States Army's *Cyberspace Operations Concept Capability Plan 2016-2028*, www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/tp525-7-8.pdf, February 22, 2010, p. 6.

¹⁵¹ Geers, Kenneth: Strategic Cyber Security, NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, CCD COE Publication, Tallinn, Estonia, June 2011, pp. 10-11, 96.

¹⁵² Geers, p. 96.

¹⁵³ Cilluffo, Frank J.: *The Iranian Cyber Threat to the United States*, The Homeland Security Policy Institute, George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA, April 26, 2012, p. 4; *Gateway Pundit*: Anonymous Online Hacker Group Sides With Hamas – Takes Down 550 Israeli Websites, November 16, 2012, <http://www.thegatewaypundit.com/2012/11/anonymous-online-hacker-group-sides-with-hamas-takes-down-550-israeli-websites/>, accessed 19.1.2013.

this model the use of cyberspace will be looked at from the perspective of motive, and activities are divided in the following manner from the hazardous activities to dangerous ones:

- Cyber vandalism/hackers (e.g. causing harm, viruses, worms, etc.)
- Cyber criminality (e.g. using for criminal purposes, raising funds)
- Cyber espionage (e.g. gather intelligence in a clandestine manner)
- Cyber terrorism (e.g. striking on critical civilian infrastructure)
- Tactical Cyber Warfare (e.g. supporting on-going operations, information operations (INFO-OPS))
- Strategic Cyber Warfare (e.g. preplanned and prepared actions in cyberspace to damage substantially opponents cyber infrastructure)¹⁵⁴

According to the model, moving up the ladder demonstrates increased requirements for the potential *hybrid adversary*, namely a higher level of quality of the attacks, more challenging targets, more resources required, and the higher level of capabilities required etc.

There are some reports dating back to as early as 2002 suggesting that Hezbollah may have started developing capabilities in cyberspace, and that during the Second Lebanon War activity in cyberspace was demonstrated by actively providing its view of events and news regarding the war.¹⁵⁵ As of today, Hezbollah is a very active player in the area of cyberspace, but the focus seem to be more in the INFO-OPS and intelligence gathering area rather than building actual cyber striking capabilities.¹⁵⁶

3.3 Summary

As seen in previous pages, most of the elements of the core variables and sub-variables are linked to each other in one way or the other. Improving in one element requires the improvement in another, and vice versa. Some critical factors in developing into a *hybrid adversary* can be identified: An external state sponsor, standoff weapons and complex terrain. The geographical environment cannot be influenced by the developing organization, but the people within that area of operation can. Also the state sponsor can be influenced, provided that the organization has something to offer for the benefit of the sponsor and thus making it an attractive long term investment, since hybrid adversaries don't develop overnight. Standoff weap-

¹⁵⁴ Kärkkäinen, Anssi: *On Cyber Warfare*, Finnish Army, November 2012, Power Point Slide show.

¹⁵⁵ Chapter 2, p. 31; *CNN International Security*: Hezbollah and Cyber War, by Paula Newton, CNN, March 14, 2008, <http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/blogs/security.files/2008/03/hezbollah-and-cyber-war.html>, accessed 21.1.2013; *Defense Tech*: Hezbollah's Cyber Warfare Program, by Ward Carroll, Defense Tech, June 2, 2008, <http://defensetech.org/2008/06/02/hezbollahs-cyber-warfare-program/>, accessed 21.1.2013.

¹⁵⁶ Cilluffo, Frank J.: *The Iranian Cyber Threat to the United States*, The Homeland Security Policy Institute, George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA, April 26, 2012, p. 6.

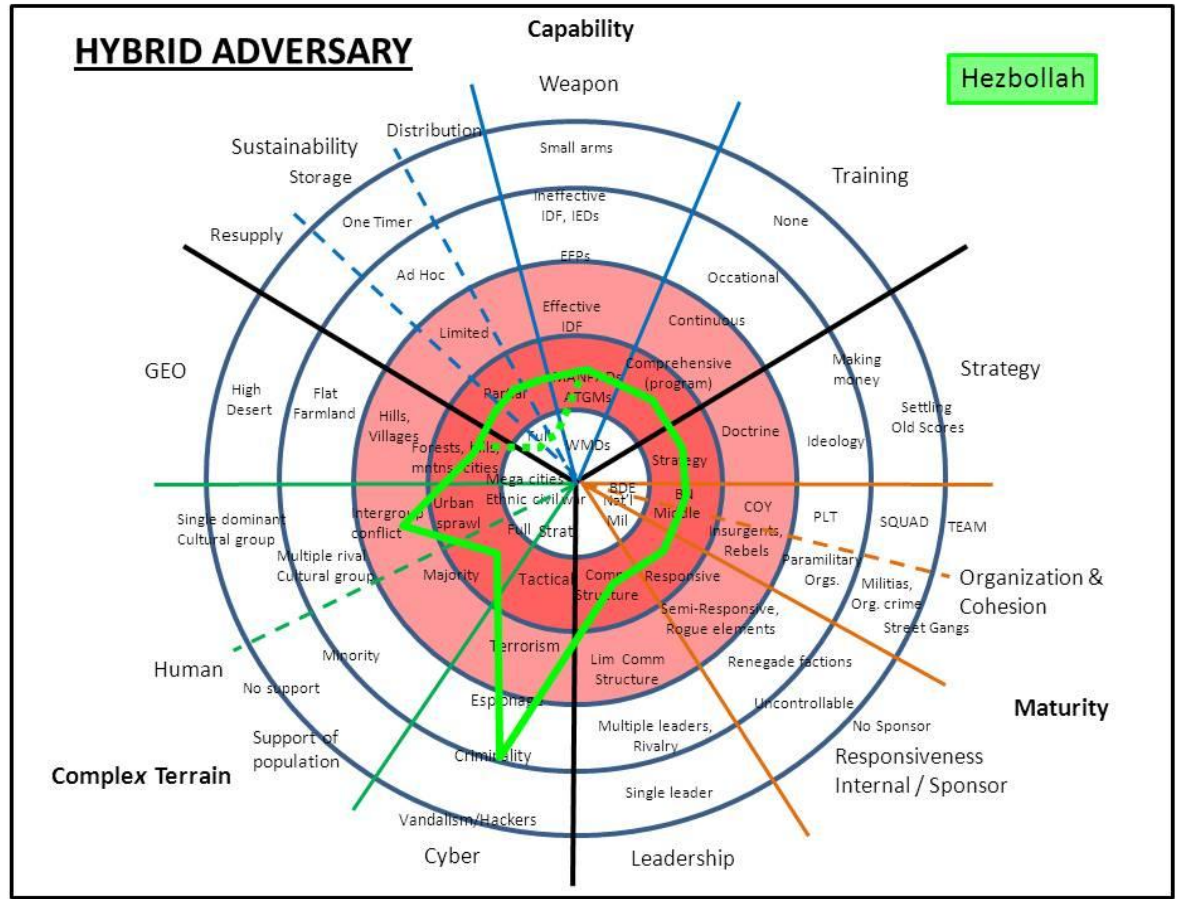
ons as a capability is something required from a *hybrid adversary*, but as discussed earlier, they are best acquired and maintained with the help of a state sponsor. It remains to be seen whether cyberspace can become such domain that could offset some of the other factors introduced in this model and become more important than it presently is in the model.

Most of the successful insurgencies and irregular groups enjoy both an adequate geographical terrain and the support of the local populace thus giving potential hybrid adversaries more of a defensive nature than offensive. It is unlikely that a *hybrid adversary* takes a truly offensive action against its neighboring states, since by doing so it may lose the advantages given to it by the complex human and geographical terrain. This does not exclude terrorist attacks, rocket attacks, cyber-attacks or other tactical offensive actions against their opponent provided that they are capable of doing that.¹⁵⁷

In this chapter I have presented a *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*. I have demonstrated the model with Hezbollah (see Figure 3, next page), and it is no surprise Hezbollah fits in the model well, since it has had a strong influence in the creation of the original model.¹⁵⁸ Now it remains to be seen does this model work with Taliban.

¹⁵⁷ Bowers, p. 46.

¹⁵⁸ Email exchange between MAJ Christopher E. Bowers and the author in November 2012.

Figure 3: Hezbollah and the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*

4 TALIBAN AND THE AFGHAN INSURGENCY

*“A Pashtun is never at peace, except when he is at war.”*¹⁵⁹

This chapter will briefly explain the history of the development of Taliban as a part of the history of Afghanistan over the last 35 years. It will be the foundation for the next chapter which will examine Taliban by using the *hybrid adversary* model introduced in chapter 3.

4.1 Background

The word *taliban* literally means “those who seek” and it refers to students of the religion of Islam participating in religious seminaries called *madrastas*. These seminaries are scattered across Afghanistan and Pakistan. Literally, the word itself has neither military nor political aspect to it. However, it is better known and associated to a religious and political movement which emerged in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 1994. The Taliban movement eventually formed the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and ruled Afghanistan ruthlessly in 1996-2001. It has been associated with the insurgency in Afghanistan in 2002 until today. “Taliban” has been used in the media freely when referring to the Pashtun or other insurgents in general in Afghanistan, or as a generic term for all anti-government militias within region, including organizations operating in Pakistan. This gives the false impression of that the insurgent movement in Afghanistan is a uniform organization, but rather a complex, multi-tribal movement with a number of different actors and alliances.¹⁶⁰

The Taliban consists mostly of Sunni Muslim Pashtuns, which is the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. Its tribal area of influence stretches from the western borders with Iran across the country to the eastern borders with Pakistan. The southern regions of Afghanistan, namely Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan and Zabul have always been considered a Taliban stronghold. The Pashtuns are an independent and have a fierce warrior legacy that has been tested successfully against foreign invaders a number of times over the course of history from Alexander the Great to Americans and their NATO allies. The Taliban are known for their ultraconservative approach in social issues, politics, and to practicing Islam and Islamic Law.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Afsar, Shahid & Samples, Chris & Wood, Thomas: *The Taliban, an Organizational Analysis*, Military Review, 2008, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a485136.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012, p. 59.

¹⁶⁰ Stenersen, Anne: *The Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan – organization, leadership and worldview*, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), 2010, http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/FFI_TheTalibanInsurgencyInAfghanistan_OrganizationLeadershipWorldview.pdf, accessed 20.8.2012, p. 11; Nojumi, Neamatollah: *The Rise and Fall of the Taliban at Crews, Robert D. & Tarzi Amin et al: The Taliban and the Crises of Afghanistan*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA / London, England, 2008, p. 101.

¹⁶¹ Afsar & Samples & Wood, pp. 59-60; Dodge, Toby & Redman, Nicholas et al: *Afghanistan: to 2015 and Be-*

The “Neo-Taliban” term was first introduced by *The Economist* in 2003. It refers to the Taliban movement that emerged in 2002, differentiating it from the Taliban movement that formed the Afghan government in the 1990’s. It has been used side by side with the term “Taliban” referring to the movement confronting the authority of the Afghan government and its efforts to build a nation. This demonstrates the confusion over the identity and the makeup of this group. “Neo-Taliban” conveys that the opposition of the Afghan government includes some characteristics of the old regime, but at the same time points to important differences of the two. The latter has evolved beyond the old regime to encompass new groups with new agendas.¹⁶²

In this chapter I will examine the Afghan Taliban or the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), and I will not include similarly named groups operating in Afghanistan or Pakistan, such as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, unless it is relevant to prove a point. I will either use the term Taliban or IEA when discussing the movement.

4.2 The Birth of a Taliban Nation

The rise of the Taliban as a force to reckon with in Afghanistan has roots firmly in the international politics of the 1980’s and 1990’s. It has been strongly shaped by Afghanistan’s ancient tribal culture, the Soviet invasion in 1979 and mujahedeen resistance, the civil war in the early 1990’s following the withdrawal of the Soviet forces in 1989, the ideology planted in the madrassas, the initial hope for peace for the war-weary people of Afghanistan and their governance, the downfall of the movement in 2002 and finally the on-going insurgency.¹⁶³

During the mid-1970’s Afghanistan was going through a stage of unsteadiness as a result of the ending of the four-decade rule of King Zahir Shah. The People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) overthrew the existing government in 1978 and to support the newly established communist regime and to counter the rise of radical Islam in the Muslim Central Asian countries, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. The PDPA issued socialist reforms that were seen by the Afghan masses as “an assault to their traditional and Islamic values”. As a result, the religious sentiments and political conservatism were adopted for self-defense and resistance groups formed locally identifying themselves as “mujahedeen” – those who wage jihad. Typical of a Cold War era war, the United States started backing up the resistance groups against the Soviet-backed communist government and thus Afghanistan became the battleground for two superpowers. The support network for the resistance groups

yond, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, UK, 2011, Strategic Geography maps III and X.

¹⁶² Stenersen, p. 17; Tarzi, Amin: The Neo-Taliban at Crews & Tarzi Amin et al, pp. 275-276.

involved other Arab nations as well as Pakistan. Pakistan, bordering Afghanistan to the East, became the conduit of military and civilian aid to the resistance groups. The close relationship with Afghan groups and Pakistan was initiated. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency (Directorate today) was awarded the monopoly over the distribution, training, and shipment of military and financial assistance to the resistance groups.¹⁶⁴

The mujahedeen resistance was met with a brutal counterinsurgency campaign by the Soviets, which fueled even more determined resistance among the Afghans. Whereas the occupation of the large population centers and securing lines of communications were achieved quickly, the disarmament of the rural Afghan tribal warriors proved impossible.¹⁶⁵ The Soviets were not able to assert their authority outside the bigger cities to the rural areas, where the poor infrastructure and the terrain prevented the effective use of their heavily mechanized forces, which were not meant for fighting a light guerrilla force conducting ambushes and raids in small groups using the terrain and circumstances to their advantage.¹⁶⁶ Initial success against the mujahedeen strongholds was achieved by using large formations, but effects were only temporary, and as the Soviets could not deploy as many troops as would have been needed to control the country, it was an ineffective *modus operandi* in the long run. As a result lighter units were needed, and were deployed to Afghanistan. Initially the Soviet forces had an absolute air-superiority over the resistance groups, since they had no anti-aircraft weapons other than small arms. The Soviets exploited their air capabilities fully – bombing assumed huge proportions, convoys were protected by helicopters, which also facilitated rapid force movements to gain initiative in case of an ambush or preventing one. This was changed after the resistance groups received anti-aircraft weapons from their foreign supporters – guns and missiles, specifically American Stingers, a man-portable air-defense system. This forced the Soviet air assets to become more cautious for the fear of casualties at the cost of the protection of the forces on the ground which again, became more vulnerable to the resistance group ambushes. As the Soviet occupation lasted almost 10 years, 1.3 million Afghans were reported killed by the Soviets and the Afghan communist government, the rural and urban infrastructure of Afghanistan was destroyed, and approximately 5.5 million Afghans had fled to refugee camps in Iran and Pakistan.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ Afsar & al, pp. 58-59; Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, p. 90.

¹⁶⁴ Afsar & al, pp. 58-59; Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, p. 91.

¹⁶⁵ Balasevicius, MAJ Thomas: *The Quagmire of Great Powers; Dealing With the Afghan Way of War* at Horn, Bernd & Spencer, Emily et al: *No Easy Task, Fighting in Afghanistan*, Dundurn, Toronto, 2012, p. 51.

¹⁶⁶ Balasevicius at Horn & Spencer, p. 53.

¹⁶⁷ Afsar & al, p. 59; Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, pp. 93-94, 100; Baumann, Dr. Robert F.: *Compound War Case Study: The Soviets in Afghanistan*, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2001/soviet-afghan_compound-warfare.htm, accessed 26.10.2012.

In 1989, following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the country was left divided into two main factions: the communist government in Kabul backed by the Soviets and the mujahedeen groups led by conflicting groups backed by the Americans and other Arab states. The Soviets continued to provide the communist government with materiel for another two years, but the communist government was forced eventually to step down in 1992 and there was an unsuccessful effort to form a coalition government among the mujahedeen groups. Soon a civil war erupted. Over the span of ten years the Afghan people were armed to the teeth with a number of resistance groups fighting for power.¹⁶⁸ These armed mujahedeen groups with conflicting interests were now all craving for power. The ten year long Soviet occupation, followed by a five year long civil war had left the society fragmented, whereas it had previously been a society based on tribal laws and customs. Now power was not based on tribal heritage, but rather military muscle. Afghanistan had sunk into warlordism – “*brutal suppression of the population, corruption, anarchy and lawlessness*”.¹⁶⁹

It was in this set up that the Taliban first emerged as a player in the game in southern part of Kandahar Province in 1994. There are several variations of the story of the emergence of Taliban, but overall it can be stated that it was a local response to counteract against the former resistance and militia forces which were implicated in robbery, brutality against local residents, and offenses against local values such as “reputation” and “local honor with respect to women”. Afghan people were tired of the war and Taliban offered a solution – peace and a return to an Islamic society governed by a strict interpretation of the Islamic Law (*Sharia*). It quickly gained support and by 1997 it controlled 90-95% of the country. It can be argued that the Taliban success was a combination of three elements: The fragmented nature of the Afghan society, the external support it received from Pakistan (ISI in particular) and other foreign nations, and thirdly the ability of Taliban itself to either assimilate or sideline other rivaling Pashtun leaders. It had become the governing movement in Afghanistan and it formed the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA).¹⁷⁰

As mentioned before, initially Taliban was greeted with enthusiasm and positive expectations by the Afghan population when they came and established their Islamic state. The extremist version of the Islamic law was enforced. Women’s rights were eradicated, shaving and trimming of men’s beards was banned along with music, arts, literature, televisions, VCRs, satellite dishes. Public beatings of men and women, executions, stonings, and the amputation of

¹⁶⁸ Together with the Soviets the Americans had transferred nearly \$11 billion in weapons to the resistance groups in Afghanistan. Crews & Tarzi, p. 39.

¹⁶⁹ Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, pp. 100-101; Stenersen, p. 11, pp. 13-15.

¹⁷⁰ Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, pp. 100-101; Stenersen, pp. 13-15; Afsar & al, p. 60.

hands and limbs became routine practices.¹⁷¹ Taliban also repressed and even carried out atrocities against Afghan non-Sunni population, excluded them from the governmental offices, making the government exclusively Taliban and thus distancing itself from the multi-tribal Afghan society. Sharing the same ideology, it was at this time that the Taliban aligned itself with al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. Al-Qaeda headquarters were based in Afghanistan, and al-Qaeda training camps were established – Afghanistan became the safe haven for global Islamic extremists for both ideological and military training. The refusal to expel Osama bin Laden, who was accused of participating in a number of terrorist attacks between 1998 and 2000 further alienated Taliban from international community. By 2001 much of Taliban's support was lost both home and abroad.¹⁷²

4.3 From the Fall to the Insurgency

The final chapter of the Taliban regime began as the al-Qaeda terrorists hit the World Trade Center twin towers and Pentagon on September 11, 2001. The continued refusal to hand over bin Laden derived a swift retaliation from the United States. By early October, 2001, the U.S. –led military intervention began with an air campaign against Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan. Mazar-e-Sharif, Kabul, and other major cities fell quickly to the hands of the United Front (aka Northern Alliance), an Afghan movement resisting Taliban in northern Afghanistan, and to the people who were fed up with Taliban rule and bore arms to free the cities. In December, the last stronghold of Taliban fell in Kandahar, and the majority of the Taliban's and al-Qaeda's leadership escaped to Pakistan. A new transitional government of anti-Taliban Afghanistan was formed with a Pashtun politician Hamid Karzai named as the chairman. The international coalition forces¹⁷³ remained in Afghanistan to assist in the reconstruction and the stabilization of the country. Despite the new government, its international support and the presence of the international coalition forces in the country, the effects of Taliban's Islamization were far from over, but rather a new stage was to begin.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Women were banned from education and public participation, their public appearances were restricted, and they were deprived of the access to health care and other basic welfare services Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, pp. 107-109.

¹⁷² Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, p. 110, 113; Afsar & al, p. 60; Stenersen, p. 16.

¹⁷³ The U.S. –led force Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the UN –sanctioned force, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). OEF's task was to conduct counter-terrorism operations against al-Qaeda and Taliban where as ISAF's task was to provide security in and around Kabul. The tasks for both forces evolved over time and eventually in 2009, the majority of the U.S. forces came under ISAF command except the OEF - forces. Stenersen, pp.16-17.

¹⁷⁴ Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, pp. 115-116; Stenersen, p. 16; Williams, Jason T.: *Understanding an Insurgency: Achieving the United States' Strategic Objectives in Afghanistan*, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, USA, 2009, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a506298.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012, p. 11.

The remnants of Taliban that had fled to Pakistan began organizing and coordinating resistance or, in other words counterinsurgency against the Karzai government. The Islamist domination of local governments in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) in Pakistan kept alive the internationally oriented support system for the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The Karzai government had been slow in achieving progress in reconstruction programs including social and economic development of the Afghan population. This combined with the fact that the Taliban “*for ideological reasons never accepted defeat and thought it was their duty to fight on.*”¹⁷⁵

In the spring of 2002 the remaining fighters of Taliban, al-Qaeda and other foreign Islamic fighter in Afghanistan were defeated by the U.S. supported Afghan forces in Shah-i-Kot Valley (Operation Anaconda) in Eastern Afghanistan. This was thought to be the last stance of the Taliban movement and those fighters who had not yet fled to Pakistan.¹⁷⁶ As a result of this operation, Taliban went on to a stage of “hibernation”¹⁷⁷ only to resurface as a stronger force in 2006. It is estimated that at this time Taliban had lost over 70% of its strength, excluding the leadership structure.¹⁷⁸

Between 2002 and 2006 Taliban withdrew to its sanctuary areas in Pakistan’s FATA and NWFP and remote areas in southern and southeast Afghanistan to gather momentum and strength. During this phase Taliban reorganized and concentrated on gathering information on both OEF and ISAF forces. Its fighters and religious instructors were inserted into the villages of southern and eastern Afghanistan to get involved in regional politics, to preach radical Islam, to protect the increasing opium trade and most importantly to prepare the rural people of Afghanistan to their return. It did not lay idle in Afghanistan either; towards the end of 2002 the insurgency grew more organized as attacks increased in number, geographical distribution and sophistication. Infrequent ambushes against the government or coalition forces by

¹⁷⁵ Nojumi at Crews & Tarzi, pp. 116; Stenersen, p. 24.

¹⁷⁶ Stenersen, p. 24.

¹⁷⁷ COL Horn suggests that Taliban follows Mao’s strategic guidelines for an insurgency and at this stage it is set at the phase of “strategic defensive”. Although Mao’s guidelines fit Taliban’s actions, it is not adopted officially by Taliban as their strategy, and thus it is not followed further in this thesis. Mao’s strategic guideline for the nature of insurgency: Protracted warfare, focus at strategic level and three strategic phases. 1. Strategic defense – focus on survival and building support; bases are established, local leaders are recruited, cellular networks and parallel governments created. 2. Strategic stalemate – guerrilla warfare ensues; insurgents focus on separating population from government. 3. Strategic offensive – insurgents feel they have superior strength and move to conventional operations to destroy government capability. At Horn, COL Bernd: Lessons Learned; Operation Medusa and Taliban Epiphany at Horn, Bernd & Spencer, Emily et al: *No Easy Task, Fighting in Afghanistan*, Dundurn, Toronto, 2012, p. 299.

¹⁷⁸ Hope, LTCOL Ian: Coalition Counter-Insurgency Warfare in Afghanistan at Horn, Bernd & Spencer, Emily et al: *No Easy Task, Fighting in Afghanistan*, Dundurn, Toronto, 2012, p. 91; and Horn at Horn & Spencer, p. 166; and Khan, Ehsan Mehmood: A Strategic Perspective on Taliban Warfare, Small Wars Journal, 2010, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/a-strategic-perspective-on-taliban-warfare>, accessed 20.8.2012, pp. 2-3.

small groups with small arms grew to frequent use of road side bombs and larger units (up to 150 men) by the end of 2002 and 2003 onwards. Reports of Taliban strongholds in southern and southeastern Afghanistan emerged as a sign of increased activity. Since 2005 intimidation and assassinations of local police officers, government officials and village elders cooperating with the Americans were frequently used as methods of persuasion of the local population to support Taliban, and to make it known they are returning. In 2006 Taliban inserted thousands of fighters from Pakistan to southern Afghanistan to establish bases of operation and their authority in the absence of an official government authority. At a district and provincial level shadow governments were formed and Taliban began to dispense justice over the local disputes in the absence of a government judicial system. The aim for Taliban was to deny the coalition and government legitimacy and thus undermine their authority.¹⁷⁹

It is estimated that Taliban had generated a force of at least 12,000 fighters to southern parts of Afghanistan, and in particular to the district of Panjwayi some 35 km West of Kandahar City by August 2006. Their size and defensive posture suggested they were to stay; moreover a force of that size posed a threat to Kandahar City, the birth place of Taliban, to be attacked. The coalition forces responded with launching Operation Medusa to defeat Taliban. In a two week battle in September 2006 the Taliban forces were defeated and their effort to use conventional warfare to fight the coalition forces proved ineffective, and it was forced to retrieve to its previous modus operandi, namely guerrilla warfare. However, during Operation Medusa the coalition forces met a far more skillful and better prepared enemy than they expected. Highly motivated Taliban operated in teams of 20-30 men (roughly a platoon size), they were capable of conducting reliefs-in-place, carry out coordinated attacks and counterattacks, they took advantage of the natural and man-made obstacles and terrain, the defensive positions had interlocking lines of fire with small arms, rocket propelled grenades (RPG) and recoilless rifles, in addition the indirect mortar fire was responsive and well-coordinated, even existing canal had been widened to make it an obstacle for a tank. LTCOL Shane Schreiber, a Canadian operations officer concluded that “*the Taliban had a battalion defensive position fully dug in with complex robust command and control capability with mutually supporting positions and advanced surveillance and early warning.*” Interestingly enough it was also noted that these positions resembled Soviet defensive positions.¹⁸⁰

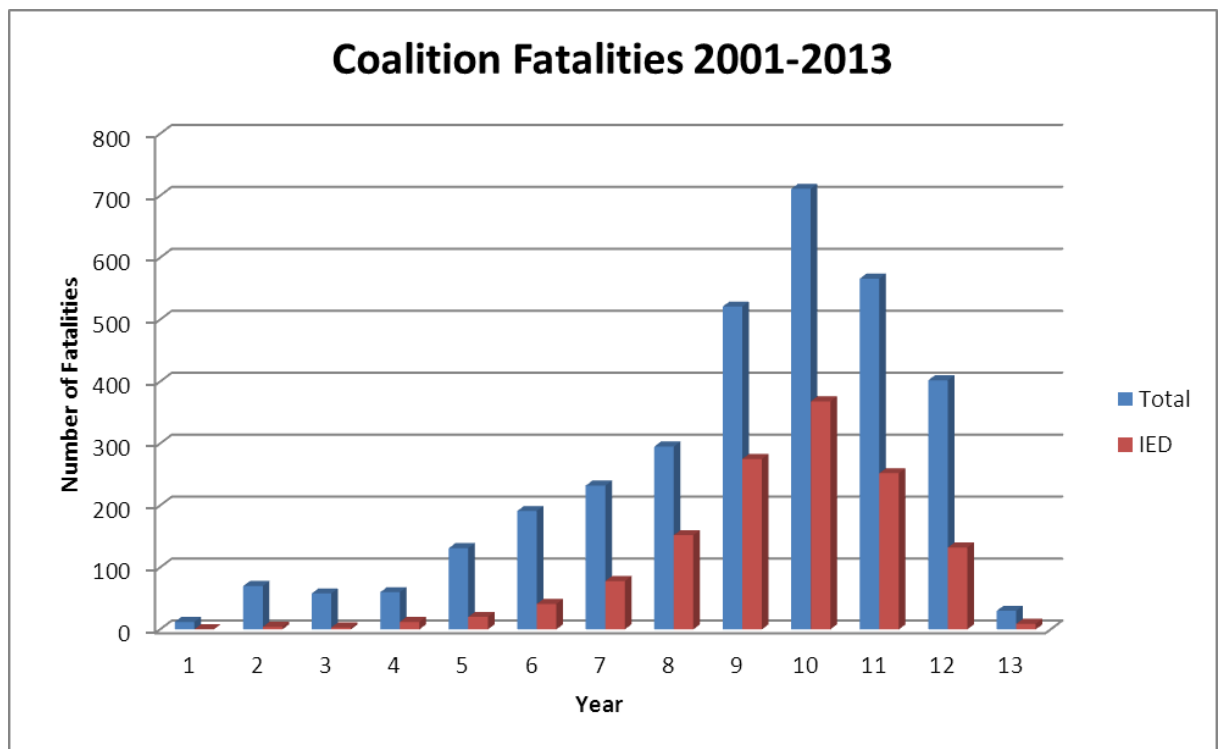
Although Taliban was incapable of matching the coalition forces in conventional warfare and suffered losses in September 2006, it certainly made its presence clear for the people of Af-

¹⁷⁹ Hope at Horn & Spencer, pp. 92-93; Stenersen, pp. 24-25; Horn at Horn & Spencer, p. 169.

¹⁸⁰ Horn at Horn & Spencer, p. 175-178.

ghanistan and that it is not to be forgotten as a credible actor in Afghanistan. It can be argued that for the sake of delivering that message it was necessary for Taliban to engage the coalition forces in that magnitude. It reverted back to using asymmetric tactics with considerable success – small groups and sophisticated improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and not-so-common in Afghanistan (until then), suicide attacks. In the spring of 2007 the insurgency resumed full strength and spread to the western and northern parts of the country. By the end of 2007 the insurgent activities reached Kabul. The Afghan government, coalition forces and even UN buildings were targeted. The increase in the Taliban activity can be seen in the Figure 3 below as well as the effectiveness of IEDs, Taliban's weapon of choice, as a cause for coalition casualties.¹⁸¹

Figure 4: Coalition Fatalities 2001-2013¹⁸²



While waging a full blown insurgency in Afghanistan, at the same time Taliban also established a shadow state that by the end of 2009 covered 33 provinces out of 34. The effectiveness of Taliban insurgency can be seen by looking at the development of the formulation of shadow governments in the country. In 2005 only 11 provinces primarily in the southern and southeastern Afghanistan were shadow-governed by Taliban, the following year 20 out of 34 provinces and in 2007 the number of provinces was up to 28 compared to 2009 when the

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p. 190-194.

¹⁸² <http://icasualties.org/OEF/Index.aspx>, accessed 9.4.2013.

number of Taliban shadow governments was up to 33 covering almost the entire country. In these provinces Taliban set up functional courts, assessed and collected taxes.¹⁸³ The success of Taliban can be partly credited for the lack of Karzai government and ISAF forces ability to provide security for the Afghan people – the provision of security is one of the primary means by which governments protect, control and gain legitimacy over their populations. The Afghan people trusted neither the Karzai government nor ISAF to provide these basic needs expected from a legible government. This lack of credibility on the other hand increased the number of volunteers willing to serve the Taliban. Moreover, as the Taliban's influence increased in Afghanistan, during all this time the Pakistani sanctuaries provided it with both shelter and training camps to further improve its capabilities. Combined with the tribal nature of Afghanistan's society, severely restricted terrain, and lack of infrastructure, it was (and still is) difficult for the central government to project power and control its population through legitimate bureaucratic functions. Thus, in large parts of Afghanistan, the Taliban was (and still is) able to control the population and provide an outlet for the population's demands.¹⁸⁴

To counter this new ever increasing volume of Taliban activity and influence in Afghanistan, a new strategy was needed. In 2010 the Obama Administration began executing a new strategy outlined by General Stanley McChrystal, the ISAF commander. His plan consisted of four main pillars: Developing a significantly larger and more effective Afghan National Security Force (ANSF), prioritization of good governance acceptable to the Afghan people, gaining initiative and reversing the insurgency's momentum by taking the fight to the enemy and prioritizing resources to critical areas. To succeed in these tasks additional resources were needed and allocated as well. This was a change to ISAF strategy that had previously been mostly defensive in nature, valuing the protection economic corridors and development projects against the threat level rather than the actively engaging the enemy.¹⁸⁵ An upswing of American troops was seen deployed to Afghanistan; 17,000 combat troops and 4,000 U.S. military personnel to train the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF). Other ISAF nations were not as eager to commit more combat troops to Afghanistan as the Americans were. Due to successive surges from July 2009 to July 2011 the U.S. troop contribution to ISAF had increased

¹⁸³ Khan, pp. 2-3.

¹⁸⁴ Williams, Jason T.: *Understanding an Insurgency: Achieving the United States' Strategic Objectives in Afghanistan*, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, USA, 2009, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a506298.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012, pp. 18-19; Balasevicius at Horn & Spencer, p. 62.

¹⁸⁵ Kagan, Frederick W. & al: *Defining Success in Afghanistan*, American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War, Washington, DC, USA, 2011, https://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/DefiningSuccessinAfghanistanElectronicVersion_email.pdf, accessed 21.8.2012, pp. 13-15.

from 30,000 to approximately 90,000 U.S. troops deployed to Afghanistan compared to the nominal increase of 35,000 to 42,000 troops from other coalition countries.¹⁸⁶

In 2009 and 2010, since Central Helmand River Valley and Kandahar had always been strong areas of support for Taliban, GEN McChrystal set ISAF main effort to clear these areas of Taliban influence. By doing this, it was estimated that the Taliban insurgency could not persist in a meaningful form and it would support the Afghan government's efforts to display both political authority and control of territory, which could not be said if Taliban showed strong presence in the area. By the end of 2010 the new strategy on Afghanistan seemed to work; Taliban had lost its strongholds in Helmand and in Kandahar and it appeared that insurgency was losing momentum and those regions appeared to become more Afghan government and coalition friendly thus reversing the insurgency.¹⁸⁷

The strong and active presence in the southern parts of Afghanistan proved officially a successful strategy, which has eventually led to the downsizing of the U.S. troops in the country and the claims that the surge of troops and the new strategy worked. Whereas the southern parts of Afghanistan did calm down, namely Helmand and Kandahar, other parts did not since similar operations were not carried out in other provinces. Contrary to the official standpoint regarding success in Afghanistan, namely statistics on Enemy-initiated attacks (EIA) by ISAF, IED attacks by ISAF, casualties inflicted on the civilians by United Nations (UN) and terrorist attacks and related deaths in Afghanistan by National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) all prove otherwise. All of the mentioned statistics show the level of Taliban activity is currently considerably higher than it was in 2008 before the surge began.¹⁸⁸ There are predictions and allegations that some ANSF units prepare for the return of the Taliban as the majority of the ISAF troops are leaving after 2014 by making deals with the Taliban; such as not shooting at them or being shot back, or if arresting a Taliban member, releasing him soon.¹⁸⁹ The fact that the number of civilian casualties is increasing, is disturbing, and it does neither support the fact that Taliban is losing momentum nor that the transition process is on track, nor that ANSF or ISAF are providing security for the Afghan people. Moreover, whereas ISAF's mission has been stated to come to an end at the end of 2014 and the ANSF taking over the role

¹⁸⁶ Dodge & Redman, *Strategic Geopgraphy*, pp. IV-V; Balasevicius at Horn & Spencer, p. 62; The Guardian: Afghanistan troop numbers data: how many does each country send to the Nato mission there? 22.6.2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2009/sep/21/afghanistan-troop-numbers-nato-data>, accessed 10.4.2013.

¹⁸⁷ Kagan & al, p. 19-23.

¹⁸⁸ Joscelyn, Thomas & Roggio, Bill: Analysis: The Taliban's 'momentum' has not been broken, *The Long War Journal*, 2013, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/09/analysis_the_taliban.php, accessed 4.4.2013. See Enclosure 9.3 Statistics on Taliban.

¹⁸⁹ Davis, LTCOL Daniel L.: Truth, lies and Afghanistan: How military leaders have let us down, *Armed Forces*

of providing security, it can be expected to become an arduous or impossible task, and suggests that the tale of Taliban is far from over. Whether Taliban will move on to an offensive, once ISAF operation ends in 2014 or not remains to be seen, but based on the statements of IEA the first is more probable.

5 TALIBAN AND THE MODEL

In this chapter Taliban is placed under the examination according to the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* introduced in chapter 3. The focus will be on Taliban as an organization from its rise to power in the mid 1990's until today. Nonetheless, if needed, we will go back in time to demonstrate a particular point.

5.1 Capability

Capability was one of the core variables of the model. It was to consist of a particular, preferably a standoff *weapon* in substantial numbers, *training* to use it effectively and the *sustainability* of that particular weapon in the arsenal of the group being in question for an extended period of time. Looking at Taliban, we can say that as of now it lacks a standoff weapon (or weapons) such as Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) or Man-Portable Air-Defense Systems (MANPADS) that Hezbollah possesses and uses effectively.¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, since late 2006 and the aftermath of Operation Medusa, Taliban has used its weapon of choice, an improvised explosive device (IED) very effectively and has done so for an extended period of time.¹⁹¹ The ability to increase the annual number of IED attacks from 2008 to 2011¹⁹², and to maintain that high level suggests that the supply chain must be well organized and functional. This also suggests that there must be at least occasional training received by the Taliban fighters from either their own ranks or another organization entirely. This is supported by the evidence that al-Qaeda operatives and Iraqi mujahedeen have trained Taliban fighters from time to time in weapons-making, material, financing, new types of tactics (such as suicide bombing) and technologies, namely those they had learned in Iraq.¹⁹³ There are also accusations of Pakistani Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) giving Taliban indirect and direct support in the form of military equipment, weapons, trainers and advisors.¹⁹⁴

This training aspect is also supported by the video releases on the IEA internet pages, such as the latest one “*Lets Prepare Ourselves*” from May 27, 2013, where Taliban fighters are filmed in live ammo exercises and demonstrating their skills in hand to hand combat situations. As much of propaganda as these videos are, they still create the image to the local Afghan people

¹⁹⁰ During the war against the Soviets the American Stinger anti-aircraft missile was such a standoff capability usually associated with nation states that made a difference in the battle field. The mujahedin fighters could sustain the use of Stingers due to the substantial support received from the United States and neighboring countries. Back then with the Stinger missile in their arsenal the mujahedeen would have qualified in the hybrid range of this model in the capability core variable.

¹⁹¹ See Figure 4, in chapter 4, p. 65.

¹⁹² See Enclosure 9.2 Executed IED Attacks.

¹⁹³ Stenersen, pp. 21-22; Horn at Horn & Spencer, p. 168.

¹⁹⁴ Stenersen, p. 40.

that Taliban is to some extent systematically training its fighters.¹⁹⁵ By looking at the *modus operandi* of Taliban against the ISAF since 2007 from the training perspective, this model suggests that Taliban would categorize as having a training program aimed at improving current level of capabilities, because it has used the same *modus operandi*, namely IED and suicide attacks at an increasing rate and effectiveness for so long. On the other hand, if we look at the capabilities Taliban demonstrated during Operation Medusa in September 2006,¹⁹⁶ I must also conclude accordingly. Taliban demonstrated a capability to fight in a conventional manner, although unsuccessfully against ISAF, but proving a point that it can do that. It did so – at will – which is a precondition for a *hybrid adversary*. The manner in which way Taliban fighters fought suggests training for conventional warfare was conducted and incorporated in the battle plan. This proven capability of conventional warfare may prove to be the new *modus operandi* of Taliban once the ISAF operation comes to an end in 2014 and if Taliban chooses to begin offensive actions to reclaim power in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁷

Thus according to the model I would categorize Taliban reaching in the training aspect the level of “continuous” training, in the sustainability to “*Limited*” level and last, in the weapon aspect to the “*IEDs, ineffective IDF*” level, which could easily be upgraded to the “*Effective Indirect Fire (IDF)*” level based on the experiences of Operation Medusa. Thus Taliban is within the range of a *hybrid adversary* in the *capability* core variable, except for one sub-variable – the “*Weapon*”.

5.2 Maturity

The second core variable of the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* is *Maturity*. It can be divided into following sub-variables: *strategy, degree of organization and cohesion, responsiveness to internal leadership and external sponsor* and finally the *depth of leadership*. In chapter 3, it was suggested that perhaps the organization being examined according to the model should have survived the very conflict that gave birth to it. This condition is fulfilled, and even exceeded with Taliban – as it was with Hezbollah. Taliban survived the Afghan civil war in the mid 1990’s and established Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan; it was later overthrown from power by Northern Alliance and international coalition forces. It survived the removal from power; it began an insurgency, and has survived a number of different strategies and surges of ISAF troops over the last ten years. It formed shadow governments in al-

¹⁹⁵ Almera Studio, (No. 33), *Lets Prepare Ourselves*, May 27, 2013, <https://archive.org/details/Alemarah-33-PA-MP4>; Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan World Wide Web pages, <http://shahamat-english.com/>, accessed 25.6.2013.

¹⁹⁶ See Chapter 4, pp. 64-65.

¹⁹⁷ Hope at Horn & Spencer, p. 91.

most all Afghan provinces regardless of the ISAF operations and to emphasize its role as an important player in Afghanistan in the years to come after the end of ISAF it opened an office in Qatar and is supposed to begin peace talks by the end of the year 2013.¹⁹⁸ One could argue that the fact that Taliban could open the office in Qatar under the name of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan gives it recognition and an official member status in the talks regarding the future of Afghanistan. On the other hand, it would be self-deception thinking of a functional solution in Afghanistan without Taliban being part of it.

5.2.1 Degree of organization and cohesion

The degree of *organization and cohesion* within the Afghan insurgency is anything but easy to explain. The motivations and backgrounds of the Taliban and other insurgent fighters can vary greatly ranging from “hard-core” ideologically driven madrasa students or village recruits driven by xenophobia to “non-core” local independent militias driven by variety of motivation or pure mercenary elements driven by money. These categories and motivations overlap and it is imperative to understand that the Afghan insurgency is a complex network of actors with a variety of interests. Taliban could organizationally be called “a network of networks”. The composition of different networks (e.g. Haqqani, Mansur, Khales) is stressed beyond the clan, tribal and regional boundaries to different provinces. This makes the structure cross-woven and complicated. On local level the Taliban fighters are of the same tribe or their subgroups. According to some estimates some 80 to 90 percent of these fighters operate in or close to their own communities.¹⁹⁹

Over the years there have been surprisingly few power struggles among various groups or challenges over the leadership of the organization, namely challenging the leadership of Mullah Omar, the spiritual leader of Taliban. Those attempts and movements have been temporary and quickly absorbed back to the organization. Defections from Taliban over to the Karzai regime have been rare, but verified. This could result from the fact that the Taliban government was more diverse and had more “moderates” holding office than the Taliban led insurgency did. Moreover, the treatment given to a dissident leader, Mansur Dadullah in late 2007, served as an example of the treatment of those who do not comply with the principles of

¹⁹⁸ *The New York Times*: Taliban Step Toward Afghan Peace Talks Is Hailed by U.S., June 18, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/19/world/asia/taliban-ready-for-peace-talks-to-end-afghan-war.html?ref=asia>, accessed 25.6.2013.

¹⁹⁹ Ruttig at Bashir & Crews, pp. 116-119; Stenersen, pp. 22-23.

the IEA. Taliban sacked him publicly, announced his removal from his position and some say gave his position over to the coalition forces, which launched an attack to kill him.²⁰⁰

Although Taliban claims the insurgency is a unified effort of all Afghans, there are other Afghan groups allied to Taliban for a variety of reasons. The IEA propaganda claims the Haqqani and Khalis networks, both dating back to the mujahedeen resistance of the Soviet occupation and both being allied with the Taliban government, as part of their forces. Yet both have retained their separate identities, meaning they issue their own statements separate from the IEA's official channels. The Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG), also dating back to the Soviet occupation, holds a different political stand and ideology than Taliban, but has joined the insurgency, and thus makes it an ally of pragmatic kind to the Taliban that is not to be criticized too much to maintain the unified front of the insurgency.²⁰¹ This just demonstrates that changing of alliances has been a common feature of the Afghan war-fighting; alliances are formed out of necessity or interests of some kind and as they change, so may the alliances change. However, Taliban has managed to create the kind of cohesion among itself and its Afghan allies to make it a credible player in Afghanistan in the past, now and in the future.

Another issue to evaluate in the model in the sub-variable *organization & cohesion* was the ability to operate different size units. Over the years Taliban has demonstrated a capability to adapt its modus operandi according to its foe and its success in battle. It has used guerrilla tactics; IEDs, suicide bombings, small arms fire, mortars, and rocket propelled grenades and even tried conventional warfare. It has operated in small teams, in larger units up to 150 men or even battalion size defensive positions against ISAF in Operation Medusa as described by LTCOL Shane Schreiber in chapter 4.²⁰² In the light of this information, according to the model I would categorize Taliban falling in the *insurgent, rebel* range. Regardless of the actions demonstrated during Operation Medusa and the recent training video ("Lets prepare ourselves")²⁰³ in which the trainees all appear in uniforms to create an image of a developed training organization, the lack of large scale operations in the near history retain Taliban in the lower level and not bring it to the *middle* range.

5.2.2 Leadership

Taliban is said to have one or more leadership councils (*shuras*) in Pakistan. The most important one is the so called "Quetta Shura" based in the vicinity of the city Quetta in north-

²⁰⁰ Stenersen, pp. 45-47.

²⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 58-60.

²⁰² Balasevicius at Horn & Spencer, p.61; Stenersen, p. 25.

²⁰³ Almera Studio.

western Pakistan. The spiritual leader of Taliban, Mullah Omar, is believed to locate in Quetta. Taliban denies that any of its leadership is located in Pakistan. It is difficult to get an accurate picture of the nature and the composition of the Taliban leadership structure from open sources due to inconsistencies and insufficient and even contradictory information. This could result from Taliban's intentions of hiding information and thus serving their propaganda purposes. However, it can be said that Taliban organization has developed over time, as do all organizations. What can be said for sure is that Mullah Omar is still the leader, and the rest is unconfirmed, but it could consist of the Omar's deputy, two shuras (military and legislative) and a number of committees (finance, media, preaching, recruitment etc.) Taliban leadership is more than just a collection of guerrilla leaders; they have mechanisms and resources to carry out political and media campaigns.²⁰⁴

The amount of influence the Taliban leadership has in the field level is difficult to measure. Undoubtedly in some areas the local commanders are acting on their own without the guidance of central leadership whereas in others the influence of central leadership is stronger. However, it can be said that the role of Taliban leadership in the initiation of the insurgency was strong. The recognition of Mullah Omar as the leader of Taliban by Karzai government, number of local and regional Afghan actors, the U.S. or even al-Qaeda, suggest that Mullah Omar has strong influence over his fighters and the participants of the insurgency in general. The day-to-day command and control of the Taliban commanders in Afghanistan may be limited due to long distances and inexistent secure communication channels, yet the field commanders are capable of operating effectively. There is evidence of issued directions and guidelines, a "Code of Conduct" (*layeha*) so to speak, to have been distributed to local commanders in 2006, where guidelines for fighting were issued. It is not clear whether these guidelines were actually to be followed or was it just a show of propaganda to illustrate the "power" and legitimacy of IEA. Also there are stories of local Taliban commanders refraining from kidnapping an international journalist in 2006 due to orders given from Quetta.²⁰⁵ This suggests that the Taliban higher level orders and rules are followed, at least to some extent, by the local Taliban commanders leaving them with lots of autonomy.²⁰⁶

As discussed earlier the position of Mullah Omar as the leader seems solid and the other groups taking part in the insurgency are kept in line with the Taliban, and there are only few defections from the organization. Those individuals who choose to disagree with the objectives of IEA are either brought back in line or removed from their position, perhaps in the

²⁰⁴ Ruttig at Bashir & Crews, pp. 128-129; Stenersen, pp. 40-42.

²⁰⁵ Stenersen, pp. 43-44.

harshest way as was the case with Mansur Dadullah mentioned earlier. Year after year Taliban has been able to replace its leaders at all levels of those who have been killed or captured by the raids and attacks carried out by the international coalition forces. Regardless of these losses, it has regenerated the command structure and carried out attacks with high intensity over the last few years. This suggests that Taliban has a developed command structure taking into account the replacements in case of losses.²⁰⁷

Hence, according to the model, I would categorize Taliban in the sub-variable *leadership* in the *limited command structure* level and *responsiveness to internal leadership* to *semi-responsive* level thus making Taliban to qualify for the *hybrid adversary* range.

5.2.3 State sponsors

It was discussed earlier in chapter 3, while introducing the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* that for an organization to ascend to the level of a *hybrid adversary* a critical factor in accomplishing that would be an external sponsor. From the perspective of the model, two external sponsors of Taliban can be recognized, namely al-Qaeda and Pakistan. Both parties have an interest in supporting Taliban.

Al-Qaeda's incentive to support Taliban can be seen to go back to their mutual relationship in the time of Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and in the future if Taliban was to return to power in Afghanistan it would create al-Qaeda a better environment to exist than there is at the moment, since there is no reason to believe Taliban would then turn a blind eye to al-Qaeda, because it has not done so in the past.²⁰⁸

For Pakistan, Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) and North Western Frontier Province (NWFR) areas are turbulent and difficult to govern and to maintain security due to numerous Taliban related (Pashtun) groups, which hold an overwhelming amount of sympathy for the cause of Taliban, which in turn makes it difficult for the Pakistani government to turn against Taliban. Another aspect is that Pakistan recognizes that Taliban may indeed return to power at least in some parts of Afghanistan. It will thus be beneficial for Pakistan to have

²⁰⁶ Ruttig at Bashir & Crews, pp. 125-126

²⁰⁷ Department of Defense: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2012b, http://search.defense.gov/search?affiliate=DEFENSE_gov&query=Report+on+Progress+Toward+Security+and+Stability+in+Afghanistan&x=0&y=0, accessed 12.4.2013, p.5; Joscelyn, Thomas & Roggio, Bill: Analysis: The Taliban's 'momentum' has not been broken, The Long War Journal, 2013, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/09/analysis_the_taliban.php, accessed 4.4.2013.

²⁰⁸ During the Taliban regime in Afghanistan a lot of pressure was given by the U.S. to Taliban to stop the co-operation with al-Qaeda. This did not have any effect on Taliban's side, and in the end this co-operation with al-Qaeda was one of the justifications of the U.S. to help overthrow Taliban from power in late 2001. See also Kagan & al, pp. 6-7.

good relations with Taliban, which in turn serves as a countermeasure for the rising influence of India in Afghanistan. India has provided the Karzai government in Kabul with financial aid, which has helped the Afghan people, but at the same time fueled regional tensions between India and Pakistan, whose relationship is already tense to begin with.²⁰⁹

It is obvious that Pakistan supports Taliban at least indirectly by allowing Taliban to have sanctuaries both in FATA and in NWFP. Since the Taliban regime was terminated in 2001 these sanctuaries have been essential for the survival of Taliban, where it has had time to recover, train and recruit new members to its organization. These sanctuaries have provided shelter for Taliban leadership for over a decade and continue to do so, as well as a support area that is virtually unaffected by the raids and operations compared those run by the international coalition forces against Taliban leadership staged in Afghanistan.²¹⁰ The much debated support of Taliban by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) can in a way be seen as a continuation of the support to the mujahedeen fighters against the Soviets Pakistan's ISI, or its predecessor, was in charge of in the 1980's. Even though if that was not the case, the fact that Taliban leadership's presence in Pakistani territory has been tolerated for over a decade suggests that sympathy from the part of Pakistan to the cause of Taliban exists.²¹¹

Another interesting question is the role of al-Qaeda, an international terrorist organization that was openly provided with a safe haven by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan prior to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. The Taliban provided al-Qaeda with protection, shelter, recruits, and both intellectual and social support network whereas al-Qaeda shared its wealth with Taliban and later sent its troops fighting along the side of Taliban against the Northern Alliance and the U.S.²¹² The relationship between these two organizations remain close, both retreated to Pakistan after the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and both established and still have sanctuaries in Pakistan. They have had close ties; still exchange strategic information, and co-operate on the tactical level in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda has provided Taliban with training and expertise in mounting sophisticated IED attacks based on their experiences in Iraq. From the point of view of Taliban propaganda, al-Qaeda is an ally, and they will be tolerated as long as they do not try to challenge Taliban's power.²¹³

Based on the discussion above, I would categorize the *responsiveness* of Taliban to the aspirations of these two parties as *semi-responsive*. When combining it with the responsiveness to

²⁰⁹ Chaudhuri, Rudra & Farrell, Theo: Campaign disconnect: operational progress and strategic obstacles in Afghanistan 2009-2011, International Affairs, Vol 87 Issue 2, 2011, pp. 290-293; Tarzi at Crews & Tarzi, p. 308.

²¹⁰ Department of Defense (2012b), p. 5; Kagan & al., p. 3; Stenersen, p. 40.

²¹¹ Chaudhuri & Farrell, pp. 290-291.

²¹² Kagan & al., p. 6.

internal leadership discussed earlier, the entire sub-variable categorizes in *semi-responsive* qualifying in the hybrid range.

5.2.4 Strategy

Taliban is driven by Deobandi Islam²¹⁴, Pashtun village culture and the strict interpretation of the Islamic Law, although the interpretation of which is more flexible today than it was during the Taliban government in the past. Since the overthrow from power Taliban has been consistent with its statements that the only solution to the problems in Afghanistan (corruption, crime, and lack of security) is the re-establishment of Islamic regime in Kabul and the departure of infidel foreign troops. It sees itself as the legitimate government of Afghanistan in exile and is waiting for a rightful return to power. It claims it has no interests to use military power outside Afghanistan's borders, thus making it a nationalistic movement for the benefit of all Afghan people. Moreover, Afghan Taliban has not adopted the al-Qaeda jihadist agenda as such rather it has tried to distance itself from it, which cannot be said about the Pakistani Taliban.²¹⁵ All in all, Taliban wants to create and to maintain a picture of the insurgency as a being a unified effort of all Afghans, an insurgency they are rightfully leading and in the end successfully re-establishing the Islamic state they once ruled in Afghanistan. These messages are consistently repeated in the messages delivered both within and outside the organization.²¹⁶

From the perspective of *strategy*, according to the model Taliban falls short of the hybrid range to the *ideology* range, but it is far beyond of an organization just focusing on making money or smuggling goods.

5.3 Complex Terrain

Terrain is the third core variable in the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*. As mentioned in chapter 3, it could be “*a critical factor in determining whether a true hybrid adversary can exist*”.²¹⁷ In case of Taliban it can be said that the terrain really works for the benefit of Taliban in Afghanistan – it has been so in the past and it will be so in the future.

²¹³ Tarzi at Crews & Tarzi, p. 307; Stenersen, pp. 61-61.

²¹⁴ Deobandi Islam is a Muslim revivalist movement that originated in India in the 19th century. The Taliban interpreted it in an extreme manner (opposing of debate and reform, goal being a purist Islamic revolution) focusing on a strict interpretation of Sharia law that incorporated Pashtun traditional beliefs and a vision of lost ideal Islamic society. Stenersen, pp. 47-48.

²¹⁵ Afghan Taliban jihadist rhetoric's primary target are donors related to fundraising.

²¹⁶ Ruttig at Bashir & Crews, pp. 124-125, 126-127; Stenersen, pp. 51-58.

5.3.1 Geographical Terrain

As introduced earlier the geographical aspect of the model consists of high desert, flat farmlands, hills and villages, forests, hills, mountains and cities and then in the dartboard's bull's-eye the mega cities.²¹⁸ Afghanistan is a country in which the nature favors the insurgent. By merely looking at the map (see Enclosure 9.4) one can see that number of those geographical conditions expressed in the model apply to Afghanistan from flatlands to high mountains. The distances are long and the transportation system along with communication system is underdeveloped. GEN Karl Eikenberry said in 2005 that “*where the road ends, the Taliban begins*” to demonstrate the point of poor transportation system of which less than one third were paved. Since the downfall of Taliban, over 13,000 km of roads have been reconstructed by the international community with the emphasis on the 2,500 km ring road connecting major cities (Kabul – Kandahar – Herat – Mazar-i-Sharif – Kabul) and Afghanistan with its neighboring countries. Because the coalition forces must use the roads to move forces, equipment and supplies, the roads have been a limiting factor and easy ambush sites for the Taliban. Paving the roads has made it more difficult to carry out road side ambushes. Terrain is rugged with mountains reaching up to over 6,000 m in the northeastern parts and to 5,000 m in the central parts of Afghanistan and flatter in the southern, western and northern parts. The restricted mountain terrain offers insurgent groups areas in which they can conceal their bases and protection at the same time since the high elevations limit the use of helicopters, in particular with maximum payloads. Furthermore, the Afghan-Pakistani border is characterized by innumerable mountain passes that enable various insurgent groups to infiltrate to or retreat from the country. These passages to and from Pakistan to support the insurgents have been successfully used ever since the invasion of Soviet Union in the 1980's.²¹⁹

It can surely be said that Taliban has taken advantage of the geographical conditions in its operations against the coalition forces, as the Afghans always have done against an invader. The fact that Taliban enjoys “home game” advantage gives it an upper hand against a foe.

5.3.2 Human Terrain

In this model, *human terrain* was divided into two categories: *group dynamics* and *support of population*. By looking at the tribal distribution of Afghanistan in Enclosure 9.5 and the com-

²¹⁷ Bowers, p. 44-45.

²¹⁸ See Chapter 3, p. 51.

²¹⁹ Dodge & Redman, Strategic Geography XIII; Williams, Jason T.: *Understanding an Insurgency: Achieving the United States' Strategic Objectives in Afghanistan*, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, USA, 2009, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a506298.pdf>, accessed 15.8.2012, pp. 24-26.

plexity of the Afghan tribal structure in the Enclosure 9.6 one can immediately say that the conflict in Afghanistan is far beyond a simple single cultural group conflict, but rather a multiple rival group or even intergroup conflict thus categorizing Taliban in the hybrid range. What makes Taliban different from Hezbollah is the complexity of the tribal society of Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The majority of the Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan are Pashtuns, but the Pashtun ethnic group is divided into two by the Afghan-Pakistani border (the Durand Line) leaving the majority in Pakistan.²²⁰ The Pashtuns are guided by their code of conduct and the way of life of the Pashtuns – namely the Pashtunwali. Pashtunwali holds many myths and radiates the golden nostalgia of the past, but it actually evolves and differs over time and space. Individuals have become of more importance at the expense of the collective interests. It is a complex and unwritten, but not a secret system transferred from generation to generation in the tribal assemblies. For Pashtuns, the role of kinship is crucial. It is a source of an individual identity. In a Pashtun society the loyalties between relatives go all the way from the bottom (family) up to the level of a nation. Loyalty is extended only when the particular level on the hierarchy pyramid is externally threatened. For example, if some group of families of one tribe would be in conflict (over e.g. water, land, forest) with another group of families of the same tribe in a particular area, they would stick together and defend themselves with higher level of loyalty against an outside group. This could in turn be brought all the way up to the national level as well, meaning that all Afghan ethnic groups could begin to cooperate when threatened by an outside aggression. This was the case with the Soviet occupation in the 1980's, but is not the case in today's Afghanistan, where Taliban has other competitors for power as well.²²¹ But even if just the Pashtuns unite against the externally (ISAF's successor) supported central government of Afghanistan, the Taliban will be a substantial player in structuring Afghanistan for the second half of this decade.

If we look at the support of the Afghan population to Taliban, we can conclude based on the previous chapter that initially Taliban were greeted with enthusiasm when they reached the power after the civil war, but after establishing the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and ruthlessly enforcing strict Islamic Law they lost the support of the people. On the other hand, the fact that Taliban was able to create shadow governments in 31 provinces out of 34 between 2005 and 2009 proves that it has support among the Afghan population based on their ability to provide “governmental” services, such as security, functional courts, collecting taxes, or just fear of the outcome of no-support provided that Taliban returns to power after ISAF's termination in 2014. Either way, Taliban has a strong hold of the Afghan population and it is

²²⁰ Kagan & al., pp. 9-10.

difficult to change that. Yet it must not be disregarded that a number of minority groups resist Taliban and do not wish them to return to power. Thus we cannot say that Taliban holds the support of the majority of the population, but has substantial support anyway.

5.3.3 Cyberspace

There is no evidence that Taliban possesses capabilities to take advantage of *cyberspace* as it is defined in the model. Yet Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) does have its own internet pages that it uses to distribute information.²²² It can be expected that Taliban, just as any organization of today, uses internet for information gathering and open source intelligence (OSINT) to support its ongoing and future operations, along with the mobile telephone networks, short message services (SMS) and e-mail at the tactical level. The *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* approaches the core variable *cyberspace* from the perspective of threat that the organization being examined can inflict in this domain. Taliban, being incapable of posing that threat defined by the model, falls far behind and thus does not present itself as a *hybrid adversary* in this sub-variable now or unlikely will it do so in the near future.

5.4 Summary

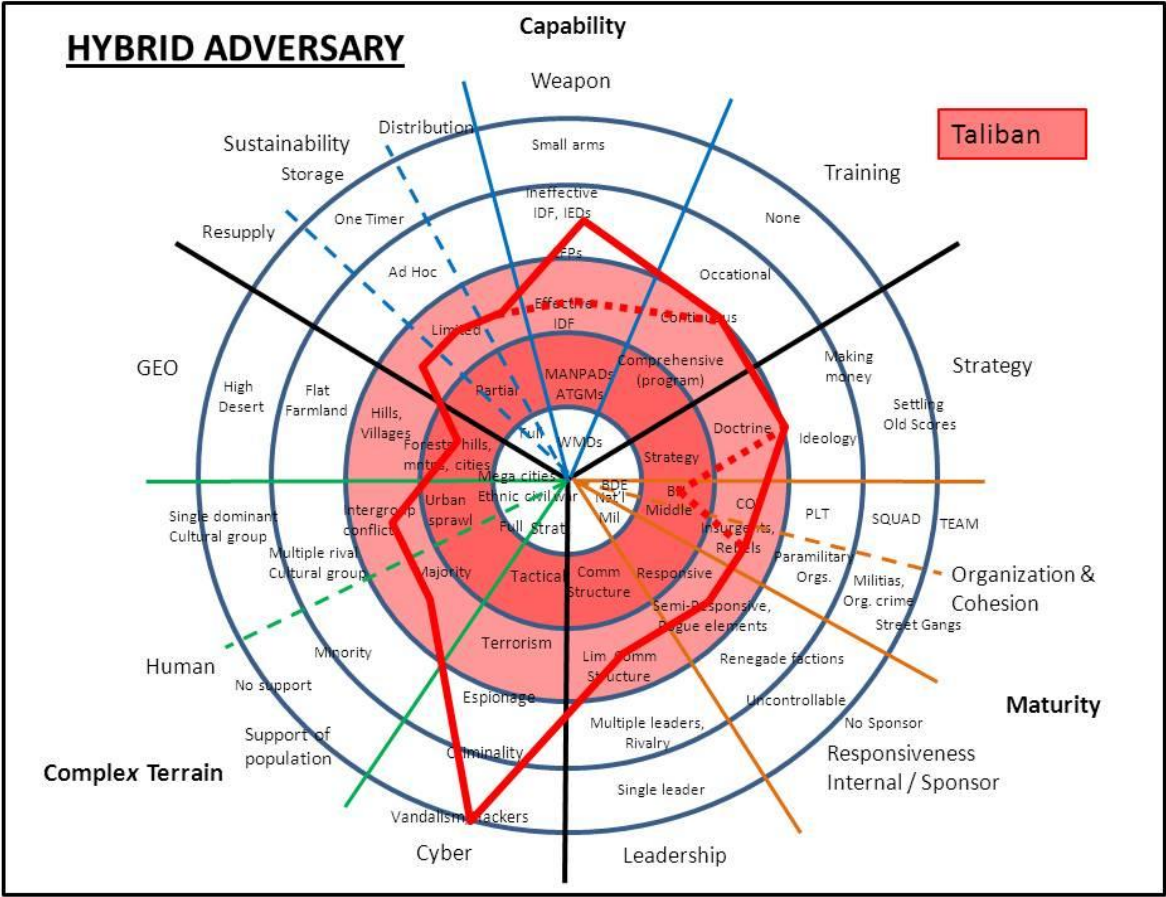
Taliban has now been examined according to the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*. As a result, according to the model, Taliban does not qualify as a truly hybrid adversary, yet it mostly falls in the semi-hybrid range (see Figure 4). This means that it possess qualities associated with hybrid adversaries that make it from the threat level perspective not to be underestimated. Taliban fulfills two out of the three critical factors (*external state sponsor*, *complex terrain* and *standoff weapons*) in developing into a *hybrid adversary*. It has a *state sponsor* (Pakistan), limited yes, but still it has one (or two if we count al-Qaeda). The *complex terrain* undeniably favors Taliban. The only sub-variable it falls short of being hybrid in this core variable is *cyberspace*. That can be disregarded, since in the Afghan society *cyberspace* does not play such a huge role as it does in western societies, so it is no wonder that it really plays no significant role for Taliban either. The third critical factor is *standoff weapon(s)* in the *capability* core variable, in which Taliban fell below the hybrid range due to the lack of these standoff weapons. If this shortfall was to change, it would quickly bring Taliban to the hybrid range in this entity and place it into the *hybrid adversary* range in the entire model making it even more of a party not to be disregarded in the future negotiations of Afghanistan. This change could be brought about with Taliban gaining access to for example

²²¹ Ruttig at Bashir & Crews, pp. 104-105.

²²² Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan; Voice of Jihad –web site, <http://shahamat-english.com/>, accessed 2.2.2013.

MANPADS, as happened with the mujahedeen fighters with Stinger missiles and the Soviets in the 1980's.

Figure 4: Taliban and the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*.



6 ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided in two parts. First are discussed the similarities and differences of Hezbollah and Taliban, that were brought about during the process of using this model to study these two organizations, then the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary* and its applicability to Taliban or other organizations. Second are presented some observations and shortcomings regarding the model, which were made during the process of writing this thesis.

6.1 Identification of a Hybrid Adversary

Hezbollah and Taliban have a similar background in many ways besides the fact that they are considered terrorist organizations by the west. Both were born as a result of the developments in their respective areas of influence due to discontent in the current events taking place - the Lebanese Civil War and Israeli campaigns of 1978 and 1982 with Hezbollah and the Soviet occupation and Afghan civil war with Taliban. Both were initially (and are) supported by an external sponsor – Hezbollah by Iran and Syria, and Taliban by Pakistani ISI. Interestingly enough both have survived the events that gave birth to them and others as well, Hezbollah reaching the age of 32 years and Taliban 19 years this year. Although Hezbollah started as a global terrorist organization both are currently regional organizations with no aspirations to extend their influence beyond their own area of operations. However, this has been the case with Hezbollah until this year. The reports of Hezbollah's militants participating in the Syrian civil war supporting the Assad regime is a sign of Hezbollah looking beyond its borders. The level of Iranian influence on Hezbollah to support Assad's regime can be estimated high, and thus Hezbollah's role as an Iranian proxy continues. Hezbollah's military support of Assad's regime can also be seen as a natural course of action, since Syria has supported Hezbollah over the years extensively. In this case, Hezbollah operates as a loyal partner to its sponsors, both Iran and Syria, and proving the relationship is reciprocal. One could also argue that "friends help friends when they are in need", and Assad's regime is in need this time and Hezbollah is acting as "friends" do. In order to maintain this beneficial relationship between its state sponsors, Hezbollah really has no other option than to side with Assad.

Both Hezbollah and Taliban are "states-within-states" in their respective areas. Both fulfill the gap left by non-existent services provided by the local government within their respective regions. The services delivered by Hezbollah to both Shias and non-Shias have won the "hearts and minds" of the population in southern Lebanon. In Afghanistan the Taliban established shadow government structures and the services they provide are limited to law-and-

order and religious guidance – limited, but more than Karzai government is capable of providing. This in turn helps to win the support of local population expecting someone to provide these services, although some give the support out of fear of repercussions of not doing so if Taliban ever returns to power in the future.

As seen in Enclosure 9.7, it appears that Taliban, similar to Hezbollah, is reaching a limited "victory" at roughly at the age of 20 years, namely the termination of ISAF operation. The Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 could be seen from the Hezbollah's part as a "victory" and the beginning of an essential period of development on the route to reach the *hybrid adversary* level it demonstrated against Israel in the 2006 war. This period in between 2000 and 2006 allowed Hezbollah to develop its organization, military capabilities and reshape the terrain to its advantage. It remains interesting to see the development of Taliban and the situation in Afghanistan after the end of ISAF and during its successor. Whether Taliban will use the time after ISAF ends to develop itself, or try to reestablish the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) as it has systematically claimed its ultimate goal to be, remains to be seen.

There are some fundamental differences of these two organizations that need to be addressed.

First, it can be said that the maturity of Hezbollah, in the sense represented in the model, is much more developed compared to Taliban. It is as an older organization, and its maturing process has followed a gradually upward sloping development curve beginning from a terrorist organization, being the only militia, participation in politics, development of military power, stabilizing its position. Taliban's curve, on the other hand, shot right up from a popular movement to the ruling of a nation to plummet after its overthrow of power, to gradually begin rise upwards again. Taliban began as a local popular movement in Kandahar and in two years it was ruling the entire Afghanistan having established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA). It was too early, Taliban was not *mature* enough to take that sort of responsibility, whereas Hezbollah spent the first 15 years being a terrorist organization and participated for the first time in Lebanese elections 10 years from its birth. The participation in elections combined with functional social programs has given Hezbollah legitimacy in the eyes of the local population, whereas Taliban lacks this legitimacy – it has done nothing to improve the well-being and quality of life of the Afghan people, neither during their regime nor after, rather the opposite. Taliban has formed functional shadow governments, but it has used brute force of fear to gain power or influence in the area, it has not subjected itself to the electoral process – to have the people choose them to govern. The support of the local population is based on fear of consequences of not supporting provided that Taliban return to power.

The second difference between these two organizations is the level of state sponsorship. As discussed earlier, the support Hezbollah has received over the years from Iran and Syria is substantial and without it Hezbollah could never have developed into such an organization and regional player it is today. Hezbollah has been responsive to the wishes and demands of its sponsors, making it a trustworthy investment, thus it has secured the flow of funding and military equipment, eventually even sophisticated weapons. Hezbollah has recognized that it works both ways, if it abides by the wishes of its sponsors, the support will continue - and it has - whilst Taliban has remained an unreliable investment from the perspective of Pakistan, its sponsor. Until Taliban demonstrates reliability and adequate responsiveness from the Pakistani point of view, the sponsorship will remain in the very limited level. This lack of responsiveness can be seen to hinder the development of Taliban.

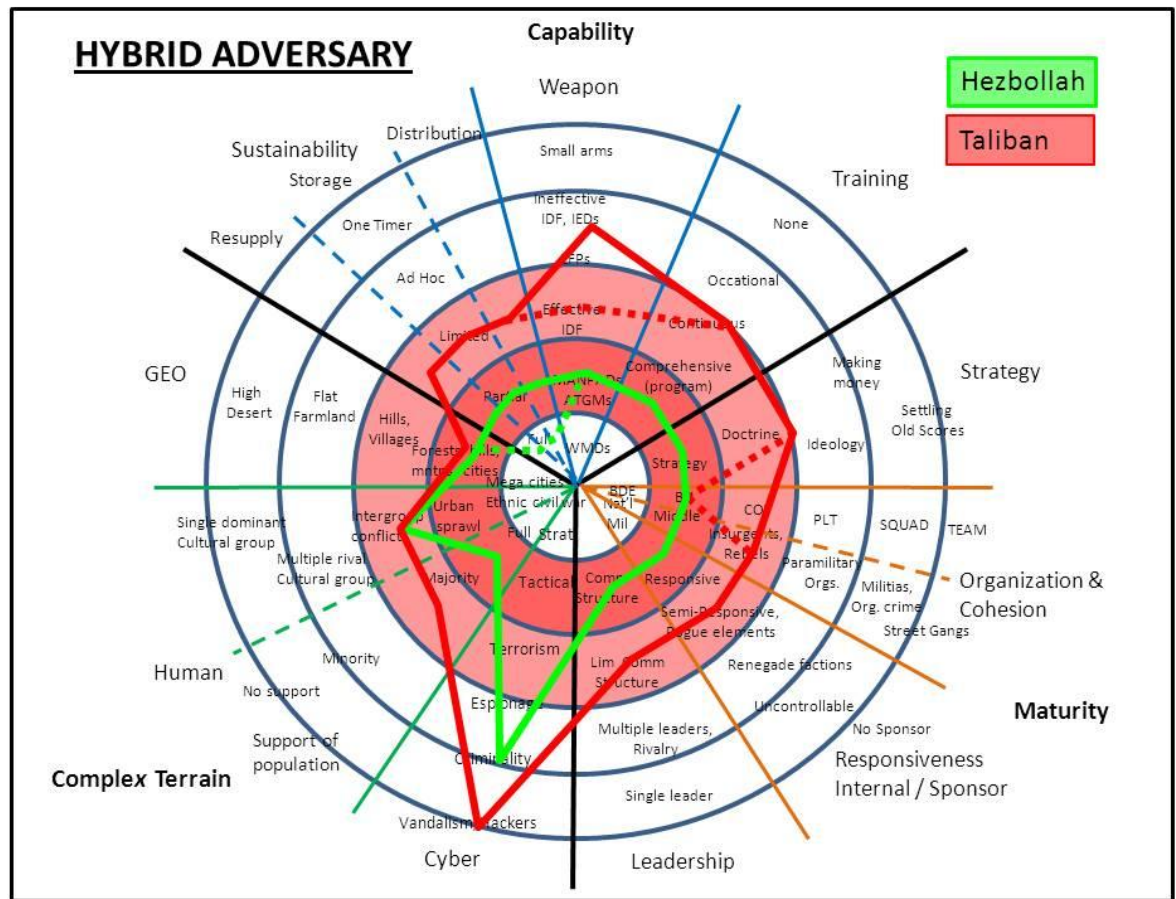
The third difference is the existence of other militia organizations within their region of influence. In the aftermath of the Taif Accord (1989), which officially ended the Lebanese Civil War, Hezbollah was recognized as the only existing militia in Lebanon. The other militias taking part in the civil war were disarmed. As a result, Hezbollah had no competition and didn't have to waste resources to compete with other groups, but rather gave it a chance to focus on its own development. In Afghanistan, Taliban is facing a number of other armed groups or networks competing for power. Some may be in a thin alliance with it, subject to change provided that the circumstances change, and some are just outright against Taliban. This forces Taliban to take these other parties into account at least to some extent and not allow it to focus all the energy on its own development. It is hardly a possibility in Afghanistan that other competing networks would or could be disarmed besides Taliban leaving it as the sole armed organization to evolve.

The fourth difference is the religion, which curiously enough is a similarity as well. Both Hezbollah and Taliban are organizations heavily influenced by Islam, although they represent different sects of Islam – Hezbollah being Shia and Taliban being Sunni. Their interpretation of Islam could be described from the western perspective as extreme, since Hezbollah draws its inspiration from the Iranian revolution and Taliban from the Deobandi Islam. The fact that religious ideology plays an integral role in both organizations makes them a dangerous adversary that cannot be suppressed by military means only, but rather it will just fuel the resistance as have been seen with both Hezbollah and Taliban. This is something not to be forgotten when dealing with these kinds of organizations.

In this thesis a model, originally introduced by MAJ BOWERS (US ARMY), was displayed according to which any organization could be examined to determine whether it is or, provid-

ed that correct circumstances prevailed, could develop into a *hybrid adversary* – an adversary that could pose a challenge to any western military in a given conflict. The original model was reshaped and made more descriptive and measurable. Hezbollah was used to substantiate the modified model, and then in previous chapter it was tested with Taliban. With both, Hezbollah and Taliban the model worked. Hezbollah categorized in the true *hybrid adversary* range and Taliban fell just short of qualifying a *hybrid adversary*, yet as we know, both have been capable and respectable adversaries in their own area of operation for their western counterparts, namely Israel and the international coalition forces in Afghanistan and the United States. The placement of Hezbollah and Taliban with respect to the model can be seen in Figure 5.

This result was no surprise, especially with Hezbollah. As mentioned earlier, Hezbollah affected the creation of the model by MAJ Bowers heavily, thus it can be expected to score well on each of the measured entities. The other reason is that Hezbollah really is the best example of a *hybrid adversary* as of now due to the military capacity demonstrated in the Second Lebanon War. Taliban, on the other hand, fell short of being a *hybrid adversary* in one of the core variables, namely *weapon*, and thus it was not categorized as a *hybrid adversary*. It fell behind Hezbollah in practically every entity measured. Moreover, it is important to realize Taliban fell short of being a *hybrid adversary* as of now due to the level it reached in the *weapon* sub-variable, but over the years it has demonstrated capabilities that would qualify it one step higher on this entity and *organization* which in turn would make it qualify for the *hybrid adversary* range. This also proves the point that it is possible to move up and down in the model due to changing circumstances. Had Taliban been studied according to the model back in 2006 while fighting the coalition forces in Kandahar during Operation Medusa, it would have qualified as a *hybrid adversary*. This is demonstrated on Figure 5 with the dotted line.

Figure 5: Hezbollah and Taliban in the *modified model of identifying hybrid adversary*

These results concur with the experiences of international coalition forces in Afghanistan. The fight against Taliban has ranged from full scale conventional warfare to counterinsurgency (COIN) to support to the Afghan Security Forces (ASF), it has not been "a ride in the park", instead complicated and rather costly, and regardless of the actions of the coalition forces, Taliban has always found a way to continue existence and influence in Afghanistan. The model points out that with few developments, such as acquisition of standoff weapons, Taliban could even increase its *hybrid adversary* level significantly and thus become even bigger of a threat or more of a *hybrid adversary* - in a sense a more significant player with military capability in the political negotiations of the future development of Afghanistan.

The critical factors (*standoff weapons*, *external state sponsor*, and *complex terrain*) brought up as preconditions to rise to the level of a *hybrid adversary* proved valid. Hezbollah has all three accounted for and has used them efficiently – ATGMs, land-sea missiles, rockets, UAVs; substantial support from Syria and Iran; complex terrain of Southern Lebanon with substantial reshaping to improve its defenses. Taliban has the complex terrain and it certainly uses it for its advantage, but the sponsorship from Pakistan is limited to sanctuaries, roughly

speaking, and is no match to the support Hezbollah is receiving from Iran or Syria. Pakistan, at least until now, has not supported Taliban to the extent we've seen Iran and Syria support Hezbollah. It has not supplied Taliban with standoff weapons, and training, in large quantities that would be needed to increase Taliban's capabilities to raise it to the next level. As much of an interest for Pakistan it is to see Taliban exist as a balancing factor for the increasing influence of India in the region, Taliban does not produce large enough of a dividend to the investment to do so. In terms of the model, this has to do with the *responsiveness to external state sponsor*. It can be interpreted from the model that Taliban is seen from the Pakistani point of view as an erratic organization and the actions of such organization may be difficult to predict and can even turn against supporter. Thus it is not being worth investing in Taliban in such volume and give them access to state of the art weaponry, which in the worst case scenario could be used against itself. As far as al-Qaeda is concerned, it is not really that potent of a sponsor to be considered as an *external state sponsor*, but rather a group that aids Taliban from time to time with training, equipment and strategy. It remains to be seen whether Hezbollah's activities in the Syrian civil war will have an effect on its capacity as a *hybrid adversary* or not, since according to the model, an organization extending its influence beyond its area of influence may result the loss of the edge given by the complex terrain, currently working for the advantage of both Hezbollah and Taliban.

ISAF coming to an end in 2014 and its successor yet undefined, it remains to be seen what sort of development will take place in Afghanistan and with Taliban as well. Hezbollah began after its teen years to focus more on its own development as a political and military player in southern Lebanon and now in its early thirties it has established its position and is to be taken into account in the decision making process of the region. However, Taliban, at the beginning of its twenties, faces the situation where it has to decide either to sit down in the negotiation table with various counterparts and mitigate its own objectives and try to reach a political settlement of some sort, or to continue its insurgency against the current government and other parties. The latter option will not result in a solution in the region, but rather bring about a civil war in Afghanistan.

6.2 Shortcomings

In the process of writing this thesis and working with the model some observations and shortcomings of the model emerged that should be noted and taken into account, when evaluating the results given by the model. These were the roles of cyberspace, finance, time, the availa-

bility of *multiple* standoff weapons and the unique tribal aspect in Afghanistan. These subjects are next discussed more in detail.

The role of *cyberspace* turned out to be unimportant in the examination of Hezbollah and Taliban with respect to the model, yet it is a domain of utmost importance to the western world. There are several reasons for this. First, as mentioned earlier, cyberspace as defined plays no significant role in the life of Taliban and it is in that sense reasonable for their part not to spend resources in that domain. Hezbollah on the other hand, could have use for capabilities in the cyberspace, but has not demonstrated that capability – yet. The expertise and resources to become effective in cyberspace requires time, continuous and active research and development, and financial resources. Perhaps Hezbollah has not reached that level yet, namely it is not mature enough in that sense or perhaps it has no interest in developing in that domain. It could be expected to do so, but when it would reach the level to actively engage in cyberspace is only to be guessed. Second, the criteria for climbing up the stairs of *cyberspace* in the model presented in this thesis could be set wrong. When setting the criteria for the model, the *cyberspace* the most difficult to come up with the definitions for different levels, and eventually the approach from the threat perspective was taken rather than focusing on individual skills, events, or capabilities in different levels. Yet before judging the criteria is false, an organization with known capabilities in cyberspace should be examined first according to this model and see whether the criteria works or not, and then make the necessary adjustments.

The second observation about the functionality of the model was that the model does not take into account the financing aspect. It is an imperative for any organization, from national armies to insurgent groups to criminal gangs to have the financing on solid ground. Continuous flow of funds has to be secured or the operations will cease. The model disregards both Hezbollah's and Taliban's methods acquiring funding for their operations. However, finance is indirectly taken into account in the sub-variables *sustainability* and *responsiveness to sponsor*. In both of these sub-variables the financing is sort of built in; to sustain capabilities financial resources must be in order and if a state sponsor is happy and the support is being received, then the finance issue must be in order too. In my opinion, this aspect of finance should be added to the model, because it could open an avenue of effect, either hindering or expediting the development of an organization of becoming a *hybrid adversary*.

Third, the model does not fully account for the concept of time. It is discussed some in the core variable *maturity*, but I am not discussing now the time in the sense meant in that core variable, but rather as actual physical time. In the case of Taliban, I came across the following statement made by a Taliban propagandist: “*The Americans have the clock, but we have the*

time.” This describes the problem at hand with the model; it does not take into account the physical time. On the other hand, this was the case when examining Taliban, an organization currently a part of an ongoing conflict, but did not appear as strongly with Hezbollah. If the model is used for estimating the threat level posed by an organization in general, it may not be of importance, but for any force commander upon entering an area of operation (AOO), it could be of value to have an estimate of the effect of time (days, weeks, months and years) on the organization about to be faced. However, as of now, the model lacks this aspect and it is just something to keep in mind while using the model.

Fourth, the model does not take into account the availability of *multiple* standoff weapons possessed by the group being examined. As known, Hezbollah has multiple weapons categorized in the model as standoff weapons, such as anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs), long-, medium- and short range missiles, anti-ship missiles etc. It has solved the question of *sustainability* and *training*, and making them a credible capability according to the model. This feature is not taken into account in the model. There is neither “capability multiplier” nor a mechanism other than the human evaluation of the intelligence officer using the model to examine the organization. The *weapon* sector in the model could be divided and a “number” of standoff weapons added starting from 1 in the outer perimeter and continuing all the way to 5 or 6 or so, as was done in the *organization & cohesion* and the operating unit size. It would seem a bit artificial, but perhaps functional. At least it would give an idea of a potential number of standoff weapons, but which ones were *capabilities* and not just events, would require each one to be examined individually. Nonetheless, the role of the intelligence officer is crucial in determining the level of hybridity of an organization, and if that estimation is left for the intelligence officer, regardless of the number of standoff weapons available, it shouldn’t pose a problem.

Last, when examining Taliban according to the model, it was difficult to deal with the unique tribal structure of Afghanistan and Taliban. Although Taliban consists primarily of Pashtuns, it includes other ethnic groups as well, through bloodlines and just out of mutually beneficial alliances. This tribal structure with changing nature of alliances is obviously handled in the sub-variable *human terrain*, but the way the Afghan tribes may unite against a foreign invader (experiences of the British and Soviets), ignoring the ethnic lines or existing disputes, almost makes it an uncontrollable weapon of some kind. Provided that this unification happened in Afghanistan it could almost be counted as equivalent of a *standoff weapon* – a critical factor of the model. It can be discussed whether it has happened in Afghanistan or not, at least Tali-

ban has been capable of establishing shadow governments and made its return credible in the eyes of the local people in Afghanistan.

There are recognized shortcomings of the model, and it could be more accurate in some aspect, but overall I believe it is adequate for the purpose it is intended for, namely identifying hybrid adversaries or those on the route to become one. To make it more reliable and applicable to other organizations, more research should be done examining other organizations and groups according to the model, see whether the model holds as is and if it does not, then make the necessary changes to further develop it.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The model that was introduced in this thesis proved a functional tool in estimating the threat level posed by the Hezbollah and Afghan Taliban. The primary research question of this thesis was that does Taliban fulfill the requirements of a *hybrid adversary* or is it likely to become one according to the *modified model of identifying a hybrid adversary*? Taliban fell short of being identified as a *hybrid adversary*, but according to the model could easily move up the ladder to qualify as one provided that it gained access to standoff weapons. The evolution of these two organizations differs from each other, but yet has some similarities. The biggest differences between the two are the fact that Taliban ended up governing the entire Afghanistan prematurely just two years after the events giving birth to it, and the level of state sponsorship being received by Hezbollah compared to Taliban due to the responsiveness of the former to the demands of the state sponsor. Two biggest similarities of these organizations are their remarkable capability to survive and become “states-within-states. Both have survived conflicts that gave birth to them and in particular the numerous countermeasures of their adversaries. Both have become a “state-within-state” in their area of interest regardless of the existing governments’ actions. All of these similarities and differences are important factors when identifying a *hybrid adversary*. The model introduced in this thesis makes all of them measurable and visually seen in one picture.

It can also be said that the modified model originally represented by MAJ Christopher O. Bowers (US ARMY) worked with Taliban. Yet there were some shortcomings that the model did not take into account, but it did not affect the outcome of the results. The critical factors (*standoff weapons*, *external state sponsor*, and *complex terrain*) proved valid when examining Hezbollah and Taliban. However, with Taliban’s the sheer volume of the annual use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) raised a question whether it would qualify for the hybrid range, but according to the model, it didn’t.

One domain was left more or less untouched in this thesis – *cyberspace*. It is the domain of anonymity, not restricted by location, rather accessible anywhere around the world, with infinite possibilities to effect and influence individuals and nations so dependent on information technology (IT). Although it did not fully fit as it was defined in the model presented in this thesis, an organization mainly operating in *cyberspace* could be examined according to the model. In that case the emphasis could be placed differently, and as a result the capabilities demonstrated in that domain could offset the importance of other critical factors presented in the model. Moreover, whereas a war of today most likely leads to the destruction of physical

targets by kinetic weapons, a war of the future in *cyberspace* may leave those targets physically unharmed, but specific or all programs associated with those targets shut down, wiped out or destroyed, thus leaving them subjected to reloading of new programs and putting them back into service in the reconstruction phase after the war. Regardless of these notions, I conclude that the model works and to improve it, more testing with different types of organizations and groups should be carried out using it before those shortcomings should be factored in.

The results of this thesis can be seen in two ways. First, the threat level of Hezbollah and Taliban was estimated according to the model – former qualified as a *hybrid adversary* and the latter didn't. Second, more importantly, the modified model presented in this thesis worked. It is a tool that puts "meat around the bones" of the "hybrid threat" concept introduced in the US ARMY FM 3-0: Operations (Change 1), otherwise so difficult to grasp. Any intelligence officer preparing intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) prior to deployment could use this model while mapping the potential adversaries within the area of operation (AOO). He could quickly estimate the threat level posed by the local groups, categorize those that could pose a real threat and need more research. In a time sensitive situation this could guide the use of time to focus on the important groups and organizations rather than equally distributing the time available between all groups identified. A group with anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs), operating in mountainous terrain and having a state sponsor would require more attention than a group armed with small arms focusing on making money. Those categorized as *hybrid adversaries* would most likely have a greater overall military capacity and thus pose a greater threat to the force eventually deployed to the AOO. As a force commander, I would be particularly interested in those adversaries possessing substantial military capacity and categorizing by any standards as hybrid. In the larger scheme the model could be used by any party to identify and monitor specific organizations being or becoming in the *hybrid adversary* range and determine the factors required to either hinder or expedite the development depending on the interests of the party in question.

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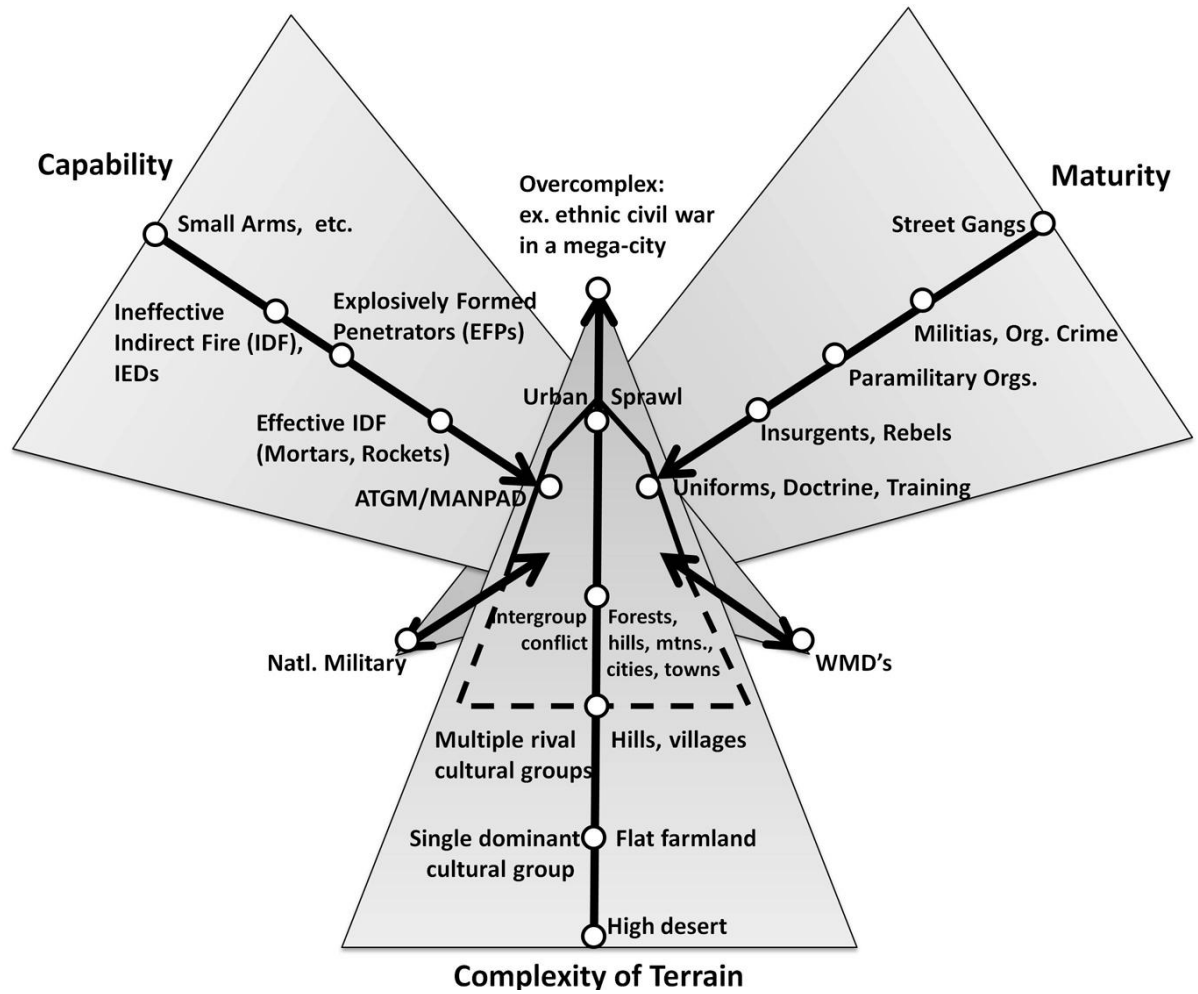
9 ENCLOSURES

9.1 Abbreviations

AOO	Area of Operation
ANSF	Afghan National Security Force
ATGM	Anti-Tank Guided Missile
COIN	Counter insurgency
C2	Command and Control
DOD	Department of Defense
EBO	Effects-Based Operations
EFP	Explosively Formed Penetrators
EIA	Enemy-Initiated Attacks
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area (Pakistan)
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GPS	Global Positioning System
HIC	High Intensity Conflict
HIG	Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin network (Afghanistan)
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IAF	Israel Air Force
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
IDF	Indirect Fire
IEA	Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IMINT	Image Intelligence
IPB	Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield

ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence, Directorate of, Pakistan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)
IT	Information Technology
JPME	Joint Professional Military Education
MANPADS	Man-Portable Air-Defense Systems
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NWFP	North West Frontier Province (Pakistan)
ONA	Operational Net Assessment
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SLA	South Lebanese Army
SMS	Short Message Service
SoSA	System of Systems Analysis
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command, US Army, US Armed Forces
USJFCOM	United States Joint Forces Command
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

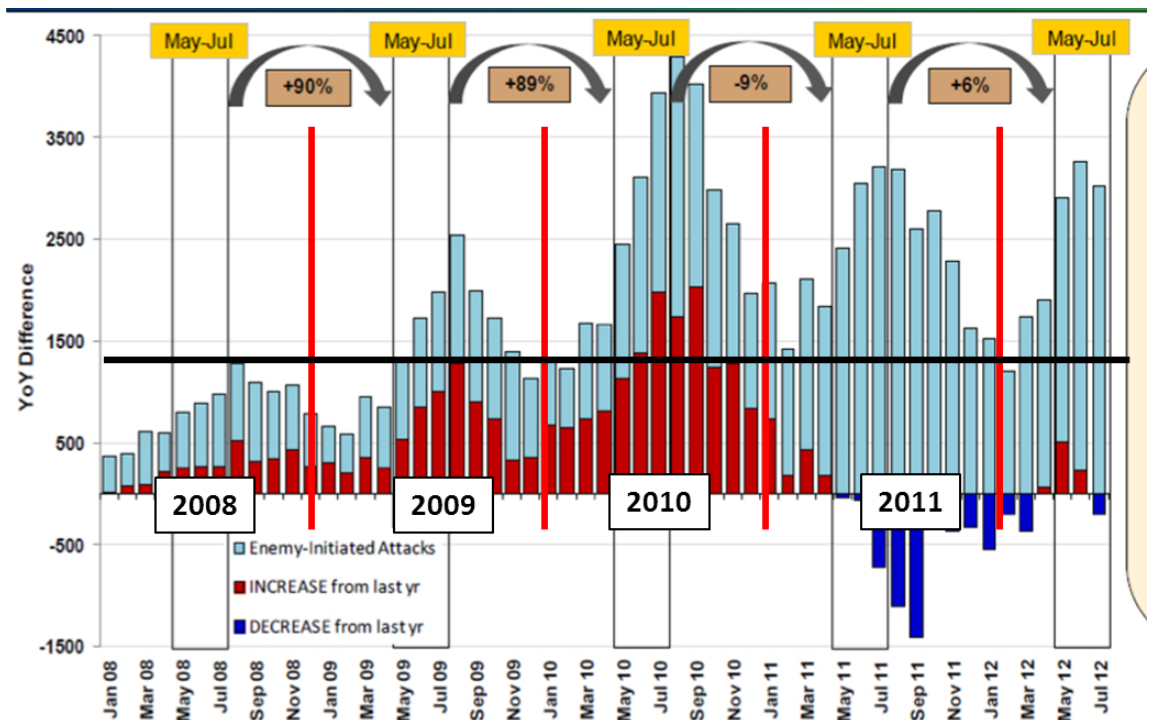
9.2 Identifying Emerging Hybrid Threats



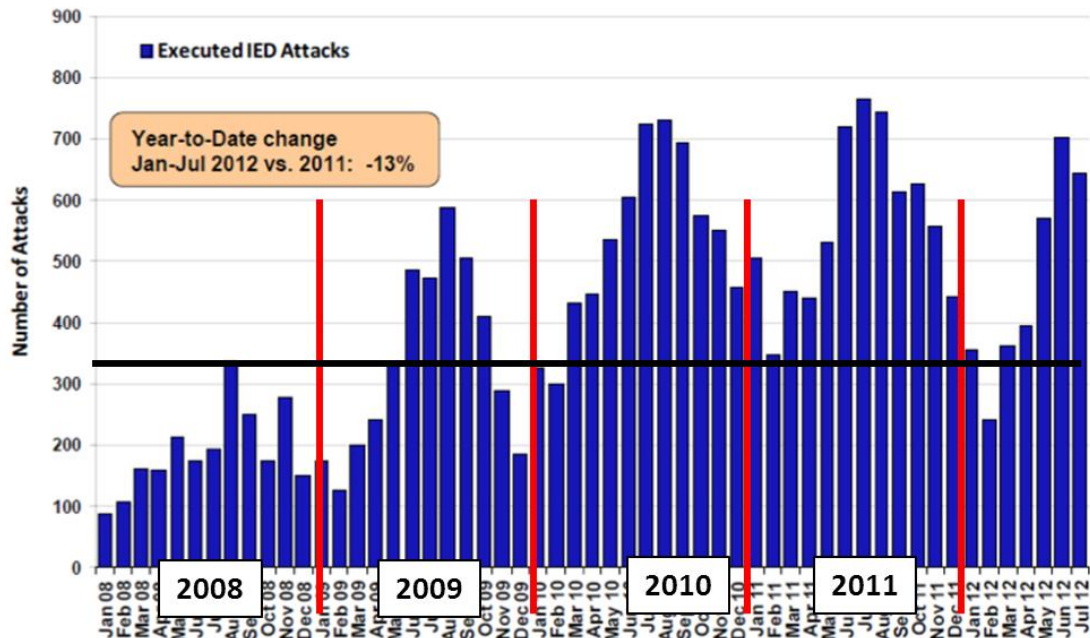
Source: Bowers, Christopher O.: Identifying Emerging Hybrid Threats, *Parameters*, Spring 2012, p. 42.

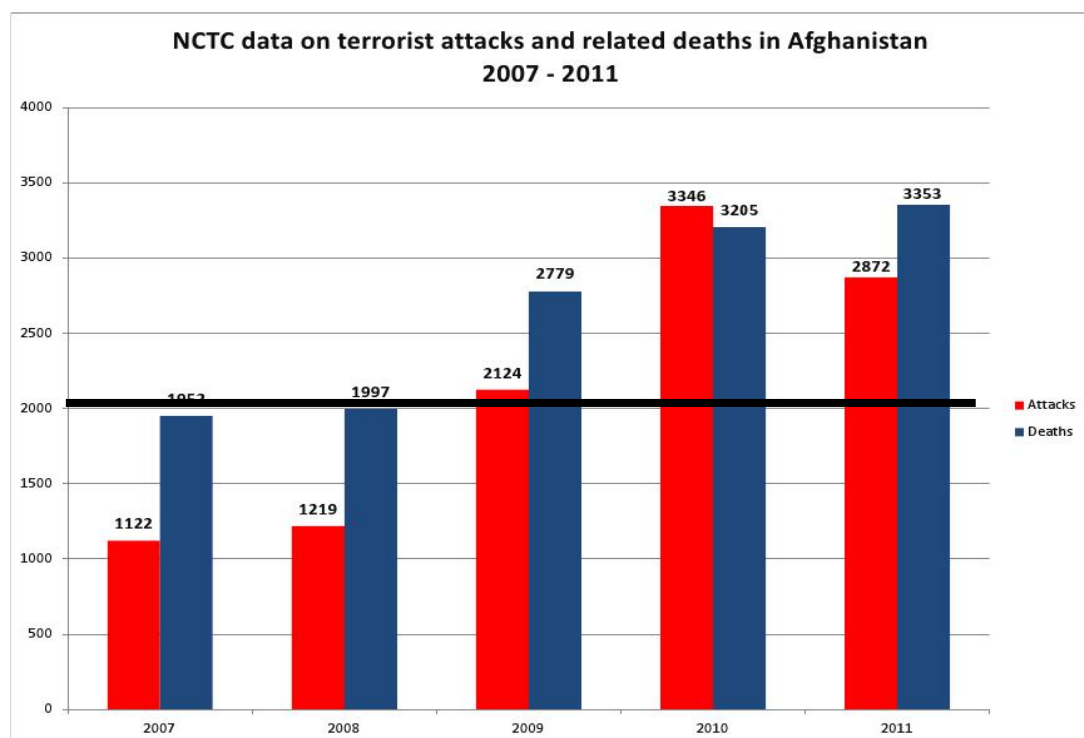
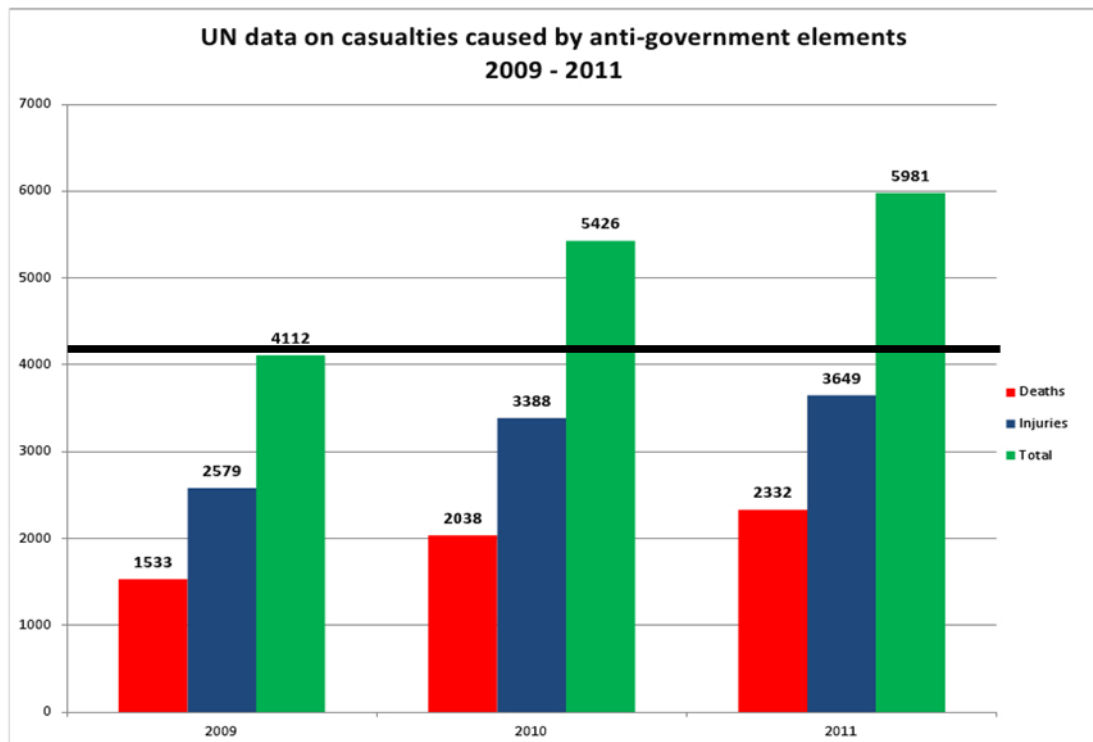
9.3 Statistics on Taliban

Enemy-Initiated Attacks: Nationwide Monthly Year-Over Year Change (Black line added to demonstrate the level prior to the surges)



Executed IED Attacks: Nationwide Monthly Attacks (Black line added to demonstrate the level prior to the surges)





Source: Joscelyn, Thomas & Roggio, Bill: Analysis: The Taliban's 'momentum' has not been broken, The Long War Journal, 2013,
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9.4 Map of Afghanistan



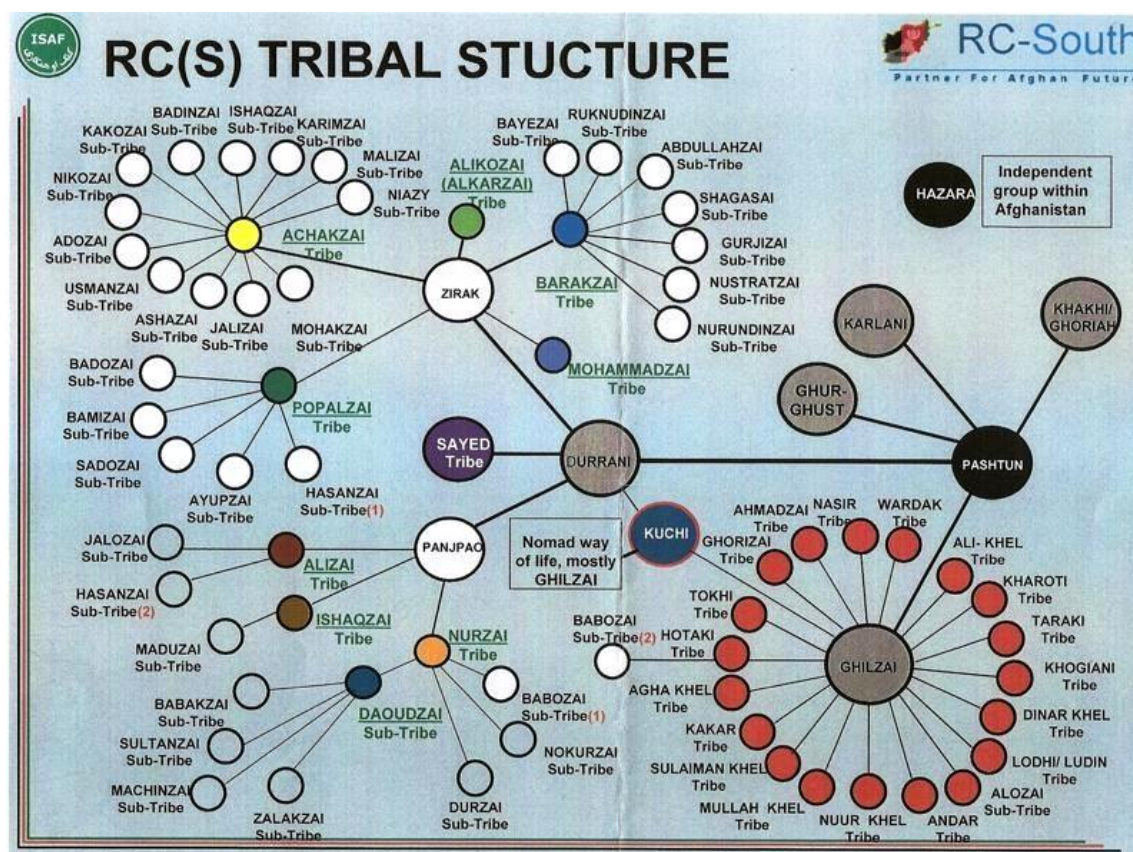
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9.5 Major Ethnic Groups in Afghanistan



Source: Ch. 4: Afghan Cultural Influences, United States Army Combined Arms Center, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, Center For Army Lessons Learned,
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9.6 Afghan Tribal Structure



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9.7 Development of Hezbollah and Taliban with Respect to Time

